THE COMMONWEAL

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CATASTROPHE

THE flood in the Mississippi valley exacts no less impressive a description than Mr. Herbert Hoover has applied to it: "the greatest disaster our country has ever known." Owing to the energy with which rescuing operations have been conducted, the loss of life has, it is true, been comparatively small. There has been no human holocaust to challenge the grim records of San Francisco's earthquake and certain southern hurricanes. But the economic loss is and will be appallingly heavy, particularly because the industrial means by which reconstruction could be accomplished are themselves destroyed. The loss of capital—of machinery, means of transportation, buildings and livestock—is reinforced by the crumbling of a link in the productive cycle. Crops and the soil prepared to receive them, the regular movement of produce upon which numberless small-town businesses depend—these have gone irrevocably.

To this debit sheet, already staggering in its cumulative effect, one must add the moral consequences of disaster. Will those who have carried on a tenacious battle with the soil go back with their old readiness to work which seems to invite the sullen jests of nature? "Good humor," says Dr. Johnson, "may be defined as the habit of being pleased." In a very real sense the conservation of rural energy, the development of agricultural life toward a worthy social ideal, depends upon the prevalence of good humor in this sense. Fortunately the Atchafalaya River district, where the river's worst ravages have been done, is settled by sturdy creoles who cling to their houses with the firmness of French peasants. If ever in our country a population has been wedded to the earth, it is here in this Acadian land. Those who go to it searching for romance and light-hearted gayety are always bitterly disappointed. The thing that matters in this thrifty rural hive is the day's work and the soil.

It is therefore more than usually imperative that everything possible be done to save these people for agriculture. If they were nomadic, if their interests were readily transferable elsewhere, it would be easier to view dispassionately what has happened to them. So far the people of the United States have made a generous response to the call for help. At the time of writing nearly thirteen million dollars has been collected by the Red Cross for relief purposes. Government officials and army forces have done heroic rescue work. One is not afraid to predict that this spirit of generosity will grow stronger as the need is seen more clearly. Viewed as a collection of private individuals,

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this nation is anything but stingy. Incidentally it may be remarked that the losses to churches and religious institutions will be enormous. The suggestion is in order to provide relief for those on an ample scale, so that the task of rehabilitation in so far as they are concerned may be carried out promptly.

But what is to be done about the situation as a whole? Who is to take up and consider the various programs of prevention which those familiar with the scene have outlined? One should weigh these queries with a complete perspective of what they involve. During the past month hundreds of towns, a myriad farmhouses, have looked toward the trembling levees with heartrending anxiety. The walled-up violence of the water, lashed into foam by winds and eddying currents, is as terrible to the imagination as some fancied mammoth dragon, wriggling ahead to its mission of destruction, ghastly with death and poverty, irresistible and menacing. Many have tried to describe those terrible moments when the roar of floods tumbling through a crevasse first speeds over the lowlands. But nobody has ever been able to suggest what this means to the aggregate of human beings affected, for whom that sound heralds not only danger but also irreparable loss and often life-long destitution.

So long as the Middle-West and the South are not free of the menace of the Mississippi, we have in our midst a source of disaster in comparison with which all communistic threats and tendencies to revolution are mere details. The community is always taut as a tennis string against these last. What is it going to do about the first? When one has glanced at some of the suggestions put forward, one realizes that the scope of activity is tremendous. In the first place, there seems to be no definite agreement as to what ought to be done. The Department of Agriculture, as we noticed last week, recommends reforestration and conservation of the soil. It points out, relying upon the testimony of numerous investigators, that these twin endeavors are not only desirable in themselves but calculated to retard the movement of water. To this the army engineers respond that this program is neither practicable nor immediately advantageous. It must be thought of in terms of half a century, and protection is needed right now. It could be put into effect only in the upper reaches of the river, which in the present situation are unimportant as causes of the flood. Finally, it would be hazardous to expend too much thought on these things just now, when other important steps must be taken at great cost of money and energy.

The military seem to agree that an adequate system of levees could be built. General Jadwin, chief of the army engineers, believes that a minimum expenditure of $10,000,000 a year over a period of ten years is required to construct levees having a safety margin of five feet above the present flood level. This conviction is in accord with the opinions arrived at by practically all official students of the problem. Already in 1879, the Mississippi River Commission decided that only solid embankments could hold the river in check and that all other expedients were of little use. In accordance with this principle, nearly two hundred million dollars have been expended. Similarly the military engineers have steadily opposed the construction of storage reservoirs, arguing that to be effective these would have to be so vast in size that the cost would be prohibitive. Nevertheless no one, so far as we are aware, has ever estimated the cost; and the levees have certainly not been inexpensive. Perhaps a half century of experience challenges the army principle to an extent which renders imperative a thorough, impartial study of the whole flood question.

This study, together with a thousand tangent points of view bearing directly upon the problem, can only be undertaken at the behest of Congress. So far the President, acting on Mr. Hoover's advice, has refused to call a special session of both Houses. It has been felt that the situation is only temporary, and that the existing organization can cope with the work of relief. Plainly, however, a disaster of such magnitude counsels provision for the future. It creates destitution which cannot adequately be dealt with through private benevolence. In view of these circumstances, we quote with hearty approval these earnest words by Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt:

"I am not one of those who believe in rushing to Congress with every problem that arises. But there are occasions when great disasters overtake large sections of the country in which immediate action by Congress is imperative. On the face of things, granting that newspaper reports are only 50 percent true, a prima facie case seems to have been made out for a conference between the President and the Congressional leaders as to whether or not this is an emergency that requires the calling of an extra session. I say both parties, because any other course will lay the blight of politics on every succeeding move."

Mr. Roosevelt's words would be worth considering if no other question had been raised than the proper method of prevention. We do not know at present what ought to be done. We are not prepared to accept as national duties the expensive developments that may be required. Now, when public opinion is alertly considering the issue, is an excellent time to settle upon a business that needs to be carried through promptly and efficiently, frankly and above board. If ten years from date does not find us masters of the flood peril in the Mississippi valley, the victims to be will have a pretty definite idea of whom is to blame. If "the greatest disaster our country has ever known" does not rouse us to intelligent and concerted action, there is little reason for believing that we shall successfully conduct any of the major business of democracy. Meanwhile it is a pleasure to praise the sound sense with which Mr. Hoover has built up a relief organization out of local groups in the areas affected, and to affirm that this success amply confirms one's hope that the whole problem can soon be solved.

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WEEK BY WEEK

THE whirring shafts of a doughty propeller have made Captain Charles A. Lindbergh the world's countryman. Certainly no dreamer of aeronautic glories could have imagined a more exciting or spectacular situation. A very practical young officer, not afraid of many things but still fully aware of the hazards of flying, set off alone in an unpretentious little ship, met his share of luck, and sauntered to victory as neatly as a triumphant runner breasts the tape. One is glad the victor was an American, but that really isn't the important point. National boundaries seem to be vague above ground, as was noticed even during the war, when armies honored hostile aviators with an impressive willingness to overlook the damage they had done. Certainly the United States was fully as ready to give poor Nungesser and Coli a record welcome as France was to shake the hand of Captain Lindbergh. There are a hundred reasons why a victory of this sort should stir the world's heart. One of the best of these has been defined in Heywood Broun's diction as a magnificent alteration in the mere aspect of the earth. "We came up," he says, "out of slumps and slouches." People are a little more averse to discipline than they should be, and the spectacle of a man who wins out over odds through determination and a vast expenditure of care makes them take notice in a very salutary manner. That borne in mind, it is really useless to discuss at great lengths the practical value of the Lindbergh exploit. He himself feels that trans-Atlantic commercial aviation is not yet possible. Perhaps it never will be realized. Perhaps success lies with craft of the Los Angeles type. We can wait and see. The Atlantic is crossed swiftly enough as things are. But who is not glad that Lindbergh refused to bide the moment of absolute safety? He has showered doubloons upon us all—treasures of joy, cordiality and unselfish admiration, all good for the soul.

THERE is so much talk about nations advanced in modern civilization, religious tolerance and the brotherhood of mankind, that the following clipping translated from the Nordisk Tidende (Brooklyn, May 19, 1927) may arouse qualms in certain bosoms regarding the tenor of their private prejudices that are so often interpreted as the norms of perfection in fair play and equity. It is a despatch from Norway regarding the results of an agitation backed by the Lutheran forces of the State Church to dislodge from his office a great scholar and pedagogue who has had the fortune to displease the majority of his countrymen by declaring his conversion to the Universal Church. Lars Eskeland is well known as the author of several scholarly works, about which we hope to present a fuller account in a future issue of The Commonweal. The Norwegian despatch published in the Nordisk Tidende reads as follows: "The Committee on Schools recommends that the Voss Folk High School receive government subsidy on condition that the school's Catholic principal, Mr. Lars Eskeland, retires on pension. It is required that he resign both as principal and instructor." This recommendation has been received by the Storting, or Senate, which is to act upon it sometime during the present session.

"IMPRESSIVE" is a word that has grown vague and hackneyed through over-use. The effect upon the imagination made by any large body of men who have converged upon a single spot in space and time must always depend upon the view we take of the impulse that has brought them together. In the immense gathering of men from New York State and City who two Sundays ago packed the arena of the Yankee Stadium to capacity to honor the Holy Name, different people will see varying significance. Merely regarded as a demonstration of loyal citizenship it was impossible, remembering the civic ideals to which the organization is dedicated by its constitution, not to be encouraged and heartened. But a deeper meaning in the gathering must have gone home to Christians even outside the Catholic communion who were witness to it. For the Name these 70,000 representatives of the nation's manhood bared their heads in unison to honor is one that is not only blasphemed by the thoughtless but denied by the material-minded many times in the course of a single day. The object of their reparation is not only its efficacy when invoked to save but its import in every act of work and recreation. Every month, as one of the speakers did not fail to remind his vast audience, the rule of their society requires of its mem-

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bers that the issues of time be examined in the light of eternity. With this thought in mind, the vast host who had gathered to bear witness to its acceptance as a rule of life took on an impressiveness quite apart from its numbers and perfect organization. It became a welcome witness that in these difficult days our own civilization is not left without the salt wherewith it must be salted unless it is to decay into the materialism and paganism where other civilizations have perished before it.

CANADA'S Royal Commission on Customs bears no exciting name, but its exploits make thrilling history. During the past weeks it has listened to news about the relief of United States thirst which must have made it doubt the prevalence of law-abiding citizens and conclude that the prosperous country across its border was in a feverish condition. According to a treaty signed two years ago, the Canadian government was obliged to supply "information" concerning any rum that might trickle over the boundary dikes. It is now in a position to make good its promise in wholesale fashion. The information collected seems to establish the reliability of three conclusions: persons interested in catering to the United States trade have done a business that is known to be worth $15,000,000 annually and may be ten times more; transportation of all sorts has been used nearly everywhere; and the canny merchants were able to buy almost any kind of official help when they needed it. The Canadian Collector of the Port at Windsor has declared that he would need an army to survey the enterprise and arrange for its repression. According to other reports, the work calls for the services of every able-bodied citizen. A short-cut to success has been suggested. This is at once so simple and so effective that one wonders why it has not been put into practice long since. The suggestion is this: let all loyal United States subjects refrain from drinking intoxicants. A first step toward realizing it is, one feels, annulment of the Eighteenth Amendment. The president of the Walkerville Brewery is reported to have said that by agreement with a Detroit magnate a "quantity of beer is always waiting to fill any orders placed over the telephone." Fancy what a commercial collapse would ensue if, owing to no necessity to display a difference of opinion with Mr. Wayne B. Wheeler, no cargo of orders should come in!

ARCHAEOLOGISTS and historical students the world over will be interested in details given by the Osservatore Romano regarding the new Institute of Christian Archaeology, founded by the reigning Pontiff, one of whose objects is further exploration of the Catacombs in Rome. The general impression that these old-time burying-places, within whose twilight the early Church carried on its worship and to whose recesses the broken bodies of its martyrs were borne, have been thoroughly examined and catalogued is not borne out by the article which Monsignor Pierre Battifol, a member of the Pontifical Commission, publishes in a recent issue of the papal organ. Very much, he tells us, remains to be brought to light in subterranean Rome, and recent discoveries only give a hint of the historical treasure still awaiting the pious historian. In prosecuting his researches, we are told, Dr. Rossi, the best known and most authoritative of modern explorers, consulted documents compiled by pilgrims of the seventh century, and using them as a clue, was enabled not only to verify many tombs that had become tradition, but to identify several unsuspected ones. Among the most interesting of these last was the burying-place of the Acilii, a noted Christian patrician family contemporary with the Flavii, and a tomb bearing the single name Ampliatus, which some authorities believe commemorates a very early convert mentioned by Saint Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, "Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord." "The Catacombs," concludes Monsignor Battifol, "are a book of which many pages have been destroyed, but a great deal remains upon which the last word has not been spoken."

ONLY the exigencies attendant on weekly publication compel us to be slightly behindhand in adding our own comments to those of the major portion of the respectable press on the incidents that attended the aftermath of the unsavory Snyder case. The tendency to turn legal proceedings into a raree-show—to pack a courthouse with special writers picked from the best-selling fiction list, and sensation-hunters smuggled in on the strength of cards bearing influential names, may be an abuse inseparable from the publicity in which our people, not altogether unwisely, have decided that criminal trials shall be held. The same cannot be said for the scandal on the day of the removal of the condemned prisoners to Sing Sing, when two aldermanic cars with women and children riding in them are reported to have careened toward the lead of the parade, apparently with the compliance of those whose business was the carrying out of the sad formalities of law with decency and dignity. Nor can the innovation of permitting zealous reporters to collect daily bulletins from those entrusted with the spiritual health of the condemned, be omitted from an overflowing budget of execrable taste. In point of conduct alone, the bottom seems indeed to have been reached in this latest of our criminal sensations.

THE manifestations at which we have glanced may or may not have lain in the mind of Mr. Owen J. Roberts, who is special counsel for the government in its suit to recover leases on naval oil reserve lands, during his remarks to the annual meeting of the American Law Institute, which was held recently at Washington. But when a lawyer of Mr. Roberts's eminence declares that "the fundamental and more far-reaching reform needed is a public sentiment toward the enforcement of criminal justice," even his admission that the question

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has become "hackneyed" should not be allowed to stand in the way of a hearing. Mr. Roberts distributes blame pretty equally between bench, bar, and public, finding in the first a "frequent display of lack of dignity and firmness," in the second "a frequent lack of ethical attitude and professional pride," and in the third, taking juries as its representative, "a lack of seriousness; . . . they often seemed more interested in the combat between counsel than in the merits of the case." All three he traces to a general "unhealthy state of public opinion toward crime, criminals and punishment for crime." Mr. Roberts's suggestions for improvement are somewhat vaguer than his charges. They include, as might be expected, propaganda that shall arouse "a real interest in the vital matter of the sound administration of the law." At present one might be excused for thinking that public interest is not only being aroused but stimulated and over-stimulated by the wrong parties and from the wrong angle. Some sort of reticence that would check the handing over of a process in law as a free present to circulation builders and near-literary exhibitionists might not be a bad starting-point toward reform.

SPEAKING before the South Carolina Confederate Veterans recently, upon the National Defense Act, Major General Charles P. Summerall put the extent of the incubus that military and naval preparedness imposes on our citizenry into equivalents the meanest imagination can seize when he told them that "a stick of chewing gum each week-day will pay your share of the military establishment: a soft drink on Sundays will pay for your naval establishment." He used figures no less significant when he told them that "the veterans of the world war are dying at the rate of one veteran every thirty minutes, or forty-eight per day, or 17,500 per year." In the face of the very slight burden, in time or money, that national defense imposes upon American citizens, The Commonweal, which claims to be behind no organ existing in its desire for peace, has always been a little hard put to understand the outbursts of indignation in which certain of its liberal brethren indulge when some disgruntled freshman or sophomore, asked to absent himself awhile from the felicities of movie-hall or parkway for the sake of practising squads right, raises the dejected issue of personal liberty. The "very small proportion" of trained students who, General Summerall tells us, "are sufficiently interested to continue to the point where they qualify for commissions in the Officers Reserve Corps," deserve a better fate than to find themselves, should some supreme national emergency break out, a little knot of over-worked instructors in an ocean of brave but undisciplined manhood.

GHASTLY incidents like the wholesale massacre which has buried the town of Bath, Michigan, in grief cannot be laid at the door of human nature. Nevertheless, comparable to natural cataclysms though they are, they lead to earnest reflections about human nature. A derouted, maniacal intelligence, abandoning the conduct of normal men, is capable of deeds which no wild beast would undertake. Our imaginations recoil from the mere notion of a fellow-being chillily plotting the extermination of little children, thinking of vengeance in terms of innocence. And yet it required only one fatal twist of the switch which unlooses monomania to plunge Andrew Kehoe into unparalleled crime. Society's only safeguard against such unfortunates is detection before havoc is done. There is no recipe of prevention, no principle of medicinal treatment. How many such maniacs are actually abroad no one can tell. Nor are their actions always homicidal, physically destructive. Purely mental monomaniacs flourish everywhere. Editors in particular come to realize, from manuscripts catapulted into their offices, how many erratic notions have taken hold of men and women, galvanizing them into self-supposed heralds of millennia. Who shall say how many similar notions, brilliantly set forth with the help of charming styles and scintillant wits, have deceived crowds into giving an ignominious allegiance? Surely half of humanity's magisterial individualisms have proceeded from impulses as insane as that which drove our gruesome Michigan farmer to his experiments with dynamite.

FOR some years past we have been noticing the excellence of the summer courses in liturgical melody offered by the Pius X School, New York City. This institution has now become so well known and so helpful to students that it invites chronicle rather than compliments. The "feature" of this summer's work will be the courses offered by Dom Ferretti, president of the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music. Long since associated with the masterly work of the Benedictine Order in reviving the traditional but forgotten modes of religious music, Dom Ferretti was consultor to the Sacred Congregation at the time when the Motu Proprio was formulated. An authority so distinguished ought to meet with a cordial welcome in the United States, particularly since he purposes to deal with the comparatively untouched problem of the relations between Greek and Gregorian music. The rest of the Pius X School program is also on a high level of interest and artistic merit. Courses in organ music, in singing, in education, will all be presided over by teachers of prominence. It is a pleasure to record that the success of these summer sessions is more marked each year.

THE annual convention of the Catholic Press Association, held in Savannah, Georgia, emphasized once more the many things which Catholic journalists share in common. In some respects progress could be reported, to everybody's gratification. It is apparent that the news service released from Washington has gained in popularity and efficiency. Mr. Justin McGrath's summary of statistics indicated that the service

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is now nearer the point where it may be considered self-sustaining than it has ever previously been. The president of the association, Mr. Simon A. Baldus, was able to declare that there existed "a better spirit and feeling." "There was a time," he added, "when Catholic editors habitually thundered against each other. That is now all changed." One is happy to agree that this spirit of amity and urbanity does—almost—exist. Its continued development, together with the development of other commendable qualities, is assured by the temper of some of the excellent addresses to which the convention listened. The most important of these was certainly the well-informed and refreshingly earnest address given by Bishop McDevitt, who is always interested in and ready to coöperate with cultural activity. Among the others one remembers especially the fine papers read by Mr. Richard Reid and Miss Mary Synon. Both of these are journalists of that fine, alert type which Catholic writing needs if it is to realize its magnificent opportunities in this country. Never before have delegates come away from one of these conventions more firmly convinced of the accuracy of the word "advance" as applied to news and comment essayed under the shadow of the Church. It would be unwise, however, not to weigh carefully the difficulties and obstacles that still exist.

SOME of the best news is of the sort that travels slowly. The official visit paid last October by Monsignor Edward Mooney, the American apostolic delegate in India to the Christians of the Malabar coast, was reported at the time. But it is only quite recently and through the medium of a Carmelite review, Il Carmelo e le sue Missioni all'Estero, that full details of his mission have reached us. During a journey of several days, the delegate visited all the sees of the district, being received everywhere with the utmost enthusiasm and loyalty. At Cochin he was the guest of the Maharajah; at Travancore he was received by its first Christian "Dewan" or ruler, Maurizio Watts; and at Quilon he proclaimed the Feast of Christ the King before representatives of both the Latin and old Siro-Malabar rites. The Malabar Christians, who are said to include about 50 percent of the Catholic population of British India, are one of the most astounding proofs of how a religion can survive in face of persecution, schism and inevitable neglect, to be found in history. Claiming, with evidence that has never been refuted, to be the descendants of a people evangelized by the Apostle Saint Thomas, and to possess his tomb at Mylapur, they were isolated from the centres of Christianity for fifteen centuries, had no written records prior to the coming of the Portuguese, and only the testimony of travelers (Marco Polo, who claimed to have touched the relics of the Apostle, is the best known) and their remains of former greatness, save their story from being classed as fable. It is satisfactory to know that since a bull of Leo XIII gave a definite status and a native episcopate to this ancient daughter of the Church, the ravages of schism have ceased, and the visit of the apostolic delegate constitutes one proof the more of the paternal indulgence of Rome to claims of continuity when duly authenticated, and to submission when wholeheartedly made.

DAVID AND GOLIATH

INCREASINGLY every year, the newspapers devote more space to the annual Little Theatre tournament. The critics now attend the performances, and find in the efforts of these devoted groups from all over the country, and even from abroad, something which they can no longer discard with a smile or the toplofty patronage of the professional viewing the work of the amateur. For the Little Theatre as an American institution (American by adoption, be it added) is slowly looming as a David before the commercial Goliath of Broadway.

In its right perspective, the Little Theatre stands for considerably more than the desire of amateurs to exhibit themselves before admiring friends. The so-called "dramatic instinct" would inevitably seek some such outlet as this in a country so vast as ours, and so poorly served by road companies. To certain types of people, the non-existence of a good commercial theatre in a small city or town would offer a glorious excuse for parading in costume. But this incentive would perish of its own ineptitude if there were nothing deeper in the movement than personal exhibitionism. No. The Little Theatre, as understood today, is a definite medium of creative effort, growing up from the soil to meet the full-throated demand for entertainment on the part of human beings who refuse to be satisfied forever with the half-loaf of the movies. What with radio giving us sound without sight, and the movies giving us sight without sound, the need of that one complete form of entertainment which is the theatre becomes imperative.

The Little Theatre, then, has grown up quite as much to meet the needs of audiences as to provide outlets for amateur actors and budding playwrights, and it is only when we recognize this fully and frankly that we see this new movement in its just proportions. It has, however, through a combination of circumstances, served another very important purpose. It has provided an inexpensive and quite competent medium for bringing to public attention types of plays that would otherwise rarely see the light. Many notable plays of the last decade—in fact, many of the most notable—have first appeared on the stages of Little Theatres, acted by trained groups of semi-professionals, and granted stage settings of unusual artistic merit. The public response to them has often been so surprising as to force their promotion to larger commercial theatres, where they have thrived and triumphed even in dollar success over the current commercial offerings.

This undisputed fact should have an important bearing on Catholic efforts to improve the general stand-

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ards of the stage. Little Theatres do not require huge endowments. In many parishes throughout the country, there are already dramatic societies whose efforts, if directed a little more specifically to this end, would compare most favorably with the average Little Theatre performance. To mention but one notable instance, there is the Dramatic Union of the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes in New York City, where, under the guiding inspiration of Monsignor McMahon, both one-act and full-length plays are given throughout the year with distinction and appreciable professional feeling. As an instance of what good work can be done in centres remote from metropolitan stimulus, we might mention the Catholic Dramatic Company and Guild, founded by Father Matthias Helfen, of Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, with which such bodies as the Saint Cecilia Players are affiliated, and which publishes a brisk little monthly, Practical Stage Work, full of hints for what and how to produce within the resources of small theatres. No less than fifty "plays with a Catholic air," to use its own modest recommendation, have already been produced by this single group.

Organizations of this sort should take part in the Little Theatre tournament. They should enter the lists, instead of confining their efforts to purely local entertainment. They should produce original plays, as well as those already commercially tested. Above all, they should provide a means of testing the worth of such plays before mixed audiences. The Little Theatre idea is an instrument peculiarly of this day and time. Its use should never be limited to those who, by chance or choice, have not found in the Christian tradition the finest source of drama.

RURAL CENSORS

EDITORS are the best judges of their own editorial policy, and the enterprise of the New York World, in making a story of small-town spite and oppression matter for a front-page article is not to be lightly questioned. The facts of the trivial but pitiful tale will ring so reminiscently in the memory of many who have had experience, brief or prolonged, of community life in remote centres of population, that merely by changing dates and names, and rearranging a few essential facts, they will be able to reconstitute more than one petty drama that took place within their own cognizance and purview.

Briefly, the story concerns a young teacher of twenty-two who, upon the threshold of his career, found himself assigned to a rural free school whose facilities serve a population of some 500 souls. It is no slur upon our agriculturalists to believe that for a youth of studious habits and intellectual interests the choice of company for leisure hours can have been neither wide nor grateful. A preference for the society of a colleague, interested in the same pursuits and probably, like himself, a stranger in the neighborhood, seemed to range itself in the category of those accidents rated as inevitable. But the colleague suffered from certain disqualifications of which none who have lived in similar "centres" will fail to realize the significance. She was a woman; she was young; she was pretty; she was apparently in no hurry to provide the censors of morals behind the window-curtains with the sentimental culmination they had grown to expect as their right. With such ingredients at hand the result was only a matter of time and place. The recalcitrant male teacher is alleged to have received a letter, couched in unmistakable terms, and inviting him to betake his learning elsewhere. No aspersion, we are told, is made upon his character. No comment is at hand reflecting upon the nature of a friendship that will drive him for the next few weeks to exchange his text-books for the "male help wanted" column as useful reading. It is even admitted that he is a "good teacher." But the tribal ukase is as unanimous as it is unexplained. "We think it better for him to go."

Now if this trivial story were an isolated instance, it would not be worth the price of a single copy of the journal that offers it for the edification of the public. But neither is there the slightest chance that, if it were isolated, any metropolitan newspaper would give it the hospitality of even its inside pages. "There are thousands of towns in the United States," the World only too credibly informs us in an editorial upon its own article, "which regulate the lives of their teachers just as New City regulates the private lives of these two." The canny editors of the World know that when they feature the amenities of New City, Rockland County, New York, they are projecting one single pencil of light on conditions that persist to the very gates of our largest cities, and awaking a responsive chord in the breasts of thousands who date the beginning of a worth-while life from the day they made their own escape into happy anonymity.

This cleavage in customs and habits of thought between two main elements of our population cannot be altogether a new thing. But there is no doubt that, as time goes on, it is becoming intensified rather than showing signs of healing. Given the nature of our institutions, its persistence may well be regarded by thoughtful men and women as a danger only awaiting some major issue to arise to make itself real and palpable. Even now it is notorious that books and plays pour into publishers' and managers' offices in which country and small-town life is invariably represented as an ordeal only endurable because the whistle of the train headed toward the big city sounds a note of anticipatory deliverance every night. This feeling of mutual hostility is nourished on the one side, there can be no doubt of it, by a grievance natural to men on whom hard and dull lives are forced by the nature of their calling. On the other side, it may well be that it is fomented by such pettifogging denials of human liberty and dignity as the village fathers of New City have just supplied a young and ambitious man with, in a measure that is likely to last him all his life.

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PREVENTIVE CENSORSHIP

By SUMMERFIELD BALDWIN

THE widely debated question of how by law to cleanse popular literature and the theatre of their present obscene tendencies has been considered principally from points of view other than wholly juristic. The inevitable discussion of sovereignty, its rights and its capacities is, of course, implicit in most of what has been written and said on the subject. Some tell us, for example, that control of these matters is beyond the right of political authority, since the safety of the state is not involved in the degree of purity of its members' thoughts. Others, with Spinoza, identifying the rights of the sovereign with his actual ability to impose his will on his subjects, urge that the state cannot suppress iniquity of this sort, and will only succeed in making a mockery of itself if it attempt to do so.

Such issues belong rather to political philosophy than to juridical science. For if we assume that the state has the right, the duty and the power of legislating against public obscenity of all sorts, there still remains the problem of the form which that legislation must take if it is to accord with those fundamental principles of justice whereby, as Saint Augustine would have it, a commonwealth is distinguished from a great robber band.

Within the past few weeks we have witnessed two examples of widely different kinds of action by which organs of government have attempted to deal with this problem. In Boston, a chief of police and a district attorney found that certain works of fiction could not legally be sold under the Massachusetts statute. These decisions were announced to a group of booksellers under some sort of arrangement with the authorities, and the condemned books were withdrawn from sale—in popular parlance, "suppressed." Curiously enough, although the chief of police is supposed to arrest misdemeanants, and the district attorney to prosecute them, and although many hundreds of copies of books which both these functionaries publicly acknowledged to be illegal must have been sold, no arrests have been made and no prosecutions instituted in respect of the guilty sales which preceded their decrees.

In sharp contrast to this somewhat extra-legal procedure, the producers of and participants in an obscene drama in New York were arrested, prosecuted, found guilty by a jury, and given jail sentences. The performances of this play had mounted into the hundreds without interference. There was no "suppression" in advance. The public authorities were not called upon by private business men for free legal advice. The show was produced at the risk of the producers. Complaint having been ultimately lodged, the law took its course, and, above all, the facts as to the questionable obscenity were found, not by this functionary or that, but in accord with American legal tradition by the sense of the community in the fair sample called a jury.

It seems impossible to doubt, as between these actual cases, that what happened in New York is in accordance with justice, and that what happened in Boston is not. In neither case was mischief prevented. In New York, hundreds of obscene performances occurred; in Boston, hundreds of obscene books were sold. In New York, the guilty were punished by due process of law. In Boston, the guilty were, in effect, protected from further danger at the public expense, and their past offenses were winked at by public authorities because they promised to be good in the future.

Advocates of censorship will, of course, urge that if books and plays were submitted in advance of publication to some functionary to receive his approval, all wrong-doing would be avoided. They will contend that all works to be put on the public market should have the fiat of chief of police, district attorney or board of censorship, and that under such conditions both the legal incongruity of the Boston case and the material damage of the New York case would be avoided. They will put their argument upon all fours with that of the school of preventive jurisprudence which holds that the first purpose of law is to prevent wrong rather than to punish it, or remedy it.

In the course of an address delivered in Brooklyn a number of years ago, Mr. Justice Brewer defended the use of the injunction by drawing an analogy between law and medicine. He said:

> The best thought of the day is along the lines of prevention rather than those of cure. We aim to stay the spread of epidemics rather than to permit them to run their course and attend solely to the work of curing the sick. And shall it be said of the law, which claims to be the perfection of reason and to express the highest thought of the day that it no longer aims to prevent the wrong, but limits its action to the matter of punishment? To take away the equitable power of restraining wrong is a step backward toward barbarism rather than a step forward toward a higher civilization.

Yet it is a forced analogy which would assimilate an injunction to, say, an antitoxin. An injunction is simply a court order prohibiting a specific act under penalty of contempt of court. Strictly, it no more prevents the doing of the prohibited act than does a general statute which provides penalties for its infraction. The offense can actually be committed in defiance of court order as readily as it can be committed in defiance of the general statute. In the first case, however, the accused is adjudged guilty and sentenced (in ordinary procedure) without the right of trial by jury as to the real illegality of what he has done. In the second case, he enjoys

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that right. The injunction, therefore, is only more intimidating. One is more afraid of the immediate effect of outraged official dignity than of the remoter effect of the judgment of the community as expressed by the verdict of twelve fellow-citizens. It seems, then, that Webster's reputed view of the danger to liberty implicit in the use of the injunction is correct, that, in fact, the theory of preventive jurisprudence upon which its use rests might easily become a mainstay of tyranny.

Yet, mutatis mutandis, procedure by injunction and procedure by censorship have much in common. Let us suppose a given book or a given play to have been condemned by the person or persons entrusted by statute with the duties of censor. There is nothing to prevent an actual publication or production. The offense having been committed, the law takes its course. Indictments are found, arrests made, and the case comes to trial, one supposes, before an ordinary jury. But the accused cannot appeal to the sense of the community any longer, for the prosecution merely proves that the work in question was prohibited by the censor, and the jury, without having the opportunity to consider whether or not that work is in fact obscene, must find the defendant guilty of publishing a prohibited work. Here again, the publisher is stopped by the fear of an authority essentially arbitrary rather than by the fear of the sense of the community expressed by a jury in consonance with the basic principles of our institutions.

Even if it be conceded that the fear of arbitrary authority is greater than that of the opinion of one's neighbors, that, therefore, less obscenity would actually be emitted under censorship, are we not allowing a dubiously tenable theory of preventive jurisprudence to upset the fundamental conceptions of law by which our commonwealth is held together? We have committed ourselves to the doctrine that the community knows best whether or not it has been wronged. To the community by immemorial tradition has been reserved the prerogative of determining the facts alleged to be criminal: did these things occur or did they not occur? A fair sample of the community is taken in the jury, and through its juries the community exercises its prerogative. It would be folly to contend that juries are infallible finders of objective fact, yet it cannot be disputed that they are infallible finders of legal fact. Further, it is hard to conceive of a case involving a finding of fact in which a jury, as fair sample of the community, is better qualified to find both objective and legal fact, than precisely that of an obscene publication or performance. Here is no problem of stumbling through a maze of evidence, as in the ordinary criminal case. The juryman is presented with the text or the dramatic action alleged to be obscene. He knows at once whether he thinks it so, and what he and his brothers think is preëminently the fact as to its obscenity vel non.

Are we justified, furthermore, in supposing that the anomalous situation in Boston would be henceforth avoided under formal statutes establishing a censor? In Boston, booksellers seem to enjoy the singular privilege of using a public officer as their private attorney. Like other business men, they are concerned to make as much money as the law will let them. Unlike other business men, they entered into a special arrangement by which their transactions could be carried on under an indirect guaranty of legality from a functionary who possessed no legal authority to give direct guaranties of that sort.

This condition would, in all probability, be worse under an official censor. Public money would be expended in order that a special class of commercial activity might enjoy immunity from interference. Some of our states have in this wise established commissions to which would-be players at hide-and-seek with the blue-sky laws must repair to receive their sovereign's assurance that their latest scheme will not get them into trouble. Armed with the commission's sanction, nay, using the commission's sanction as an argument, they proceed to float their problematical stocks at the gullible public's expense, the public, by reason of the commission's decree, being stripped of remedy even if the project is in fact fraudulent. So also of censorship, for if, through negligence or favor, actually obscene works receive the censor's approval, their publishers are immune. The shoe is now on the other foot. A private citizen is outraged by an indecent play and complains. The defendant need not even present the play to the jury. He has, under censorship, merely to point out that the proper authorities had given his production their approval, and the jury must find him not guilty.

Such are some of the needless legal complications, the dangerous abrogations of the principles fundamental to our commonwealth, into which the consequences of any theory of preventive jurisprudence tend to lead us. The law can never be preventive in the sense that medicine is preventive. Its first concern is with overt wrongful acts, to determine whether they occurred, and to provide remedies and penalties. Only incidentally, in that the very provision of penalties deters those who might otherwise act wrongfully, can the law possibly be considered preventive. Meanwhile, the desire to impress citizens with the danger of imminent and arbitrary penalty in the name of preventive jurisprudence can too easily, as with both procedure by injunction and censorship, strip them of the rudimentary right of having the actuality of their offense determined, not by this functionary or that, but by the sense of the community.

At Dawn

A refutation of the night,
Of its eternal sway:
Hark! at the first faint gold of light,
A bird's sweet roundelay.

CHARLES J. QUIRK.

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OBI IN THE CARIBBEAN

By HENRY S. WHITEHEAD

SHORTLY before the annual Christmas horse-races on the American West Indian Island of Santa Cruz, in 1922, a young colored man named Anduze, living in Christiansted, was murdered, and the murderer was subsequently convicted in the American district court. The object of this murder was to procure Anduze's heart and liver. An obi-doctor had been engaged to work voodoo on one of the race-horses owned by a black man, and the heart and liver were the necessary materials for the magicking.

The horse in question, which had been "obi-doctored," happened to win the race. Immediately afterward one of the gentleman-planters of Santa Cruz went over to Porto Rico to purchase a first-class race-horse with which to make certain that the obi horse should be beaten at the Easter races. The new horse won his race against the "doctored" horse, and what gave promise of a recrudescence of black African magic on this island of Uncle Sam's newest colony, the Virgin Islands, died a natural death.

Obi bottles hanging on fruit trees, particularly those which bear the nutritious avocado pear, are common sights in the West Indies. These are ordinary bottles, ornamented weirdly with seeds, bits of string, scraps of red flannel, etc. These obi bottles are usually effective deterrents against theft of the ripening fruit. They are tabu signs, which, if disturbed, will arouse the malicious anger of Jumbee!

Of course only the black people use magic, although belief in it is not wholly confined to the ignorant black population of those jewel-like islands which form the sweeping northern boundary of the Caribbean Sea. There is something weirdly approaching the "sacramental" about the West Indian magical practices. Here is a perverted application of the principle of the outward and visible being bound up with the inwardness—the "spirituality"—of affairs. The invisible creation of God, as the black African West Indian sees the matter, may be either good or evil—like the visible creation—and may be invoked and even compelled. The West Indian hills are full of this magic—obi (obeah). It is part of the very atmosphere breathed by West Indians. The black shadow of obeah and voodoo ("bad" magic, i. e., deleterious) lies, a great cloud, over the minds of the blacks, once, of course, the slave-population of these incredibly fruitful and lovely isles.

"T'ank Gahd it drap!" A bit of food has fallen from the hand in eating. It means that Jumbee wants that bit of food—is favoring the eater. Therefore he thanks God for Jumbee's favor, a characteristic anomaly.

Cabin doors are carefully closed at nightfall, lest Jumbee plague the sleepers. It is better to swelter through an airless night than to risk Jumbee's pranks or malice. "Jumbee," so visitors may be assured, "was invented by the old planters to keep the blacks indoors after nightfall." Belief in him seems nearly universal through the islands. In the French islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, he is "Zombi," a close philological relative. Probably Jumbee originated on the African west coast, in the hinterlands all the way from Dakar to the Congo Basin. He is one of the most important personages in the West Indies. He is a kind of demon—any kind. The term is generic. On Martinique and elsewhere among French-speaking Negroes, one of his varieties is the "Zomblesse." A Zomblesse is half man (or woman) half demon, a person able, like Stevenson's Thrawn Janet, to shed his skin, hang it on a nail, and go out marauding after nightfall when the tropic dark ushers in the myrmidons of Eblis, to plague Ham's sons. Finding and salting the skin renders the discoverer immune from any subsequent injury from that particular Zomblesse.

On the doors of Negro cabins "in the country," i e., outside the towns, crosses may be seen, much like those the Hebrews made with the blood of the Passover lamb. This is "to keep out de wolf." The werewolf, especially inimical to prospective mothers, may also be kept out by placing sand on the cabin roof, since the marauder must, by the nature of his being, pause to count the grains before proceeding to tear up the roof. This is "wolf curiosity," and that is almost an epithet! All the usual characteristics of the werewolf are also present in the West Indian variety.

There is "canicanthrophy" as well as lycanthrophy extant. The central figure of this belief takes the form of a little black woman who transforms herself into a little white dog, which bounds up steps. Touching the dog with any part of the body is certain, immediate death. A blow from a stick will turn the dog, which increases in size and fierceness with every step upward, and then the little old woman may be heard pattering away howling with the pain of the blow.

Under certain ancient tamarinds and up sundry canefield ranges lurks the dread Sow with Seven Pigs. It is a dreadful portent if these run across the path of a late-returning reveller.

Many varieties of West Indian obi cannot be described, and these include not the least interesting from the viewpoint of the ethnologist. In them, definite phobias are invoked, more or less successfully. It is a question of beliefs, "les ideés fixes."

"Snake-Cut" (recently described in Harper's magazine by an eye-witness) is still practised in the Guiana hinterlands, though I think it is unknown in the West India Islands proper. There back of French, British and Dutch Guiana, is a little transplanted Africa, and

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Africa changeth not! In the police court at Frederiksted, Virgin Islands, in October, 1925, before the late Justice J. L. Curry, a case of slander was tried. One old woman had entitled another, "to me face, Yer Honor!" a "wuthless old Cartagène!" That means "a Carthaginian," i. e., a pirate, a marauder. It was Cato the Elder who enunciated "delenda est Carthago" so insistently before his confrères in the Roman Senate, in the second century, B. C. But to this day black West Indians call each other "Carthaginians" when they desire denunciatory emphasis. Carthage was an African seaport!

Readers of William Palgrave's Ulysses, which is a more profitable book than James Joyce's similarly entitled obscenities, will note that Queen Victoria's consul-general at St. Thomas during part of Mr. Seitz' Dreadful Decade has nothing to say about the Danish West Indies (now the Virgin Islands) though he gives very full accounts of his various other appointments in the British consular service. The fact is that Palgrave, who had published in the Cornhill magazine certain animadversions on the ways of St. Thomas society, was literally driven out by a song made by the blacks about him during their spring "magicking" in the hills back of the town:

> Weelum Palgrave is a cha-cha, bal'hoo;
> He is a kind of a-half-a-Jew!
> . . . . . .
> Him go back to Trebizond.

He did! There had been certainty—hypnotism—"put" into that silly little song, which contains delicate ironies quite imperceptible on its surface, which penetrated Her Britannic Majesty's consul-general's head and literally drove him out, so that St. Thomas society was rid of its gadfly.

Love-philtres, curative "simples" made from common West Indian herbs, and "charms" of every description are in common, every-day use among the blacks, as well as the practices deriving from all the usual superstitions. Many authentic cures are recorded, for obi means both good and bad magic, obeah being, strictly, the good or curative variety.

Next to interior Africa, Haiti is probably the most magic-infested place in the world. There even the continental, European-educated intellectuals appear to believe in magic, and Haiti has always labored under the deadweight of these beliefs. It is not uncommon for a qualified physician to be called in and requested to demonstrate on a cadaver by means of a bodkin thrust through the heart that the dead person actually is dead. The belief back of this practice is in the magic of being "near-dead." This state is attributed to some enemy or to the papaloi (witch-doctor) himself, who will, after the obsequies, dig up the "dead" person, restore animation, and hold him in slavery for the rest of his life. Slavery is the bugaboo of which all West Indian blacks stand in fear.

A "toof from a dead" is the equivalent of the American rabbit's foot. Armed with this trophy a gambler is supposed to be consistently lucky. Having a dead man's hand in the possession renders a thief more bold, or immune to capture, or even invisible! Various other members of the human body are believed to possess magical properties. A piece of string is often tied about a great-toe to cause the toe to "see," and so prevent stumbling. The psychology here is simple and really practicable. The person who devoutly, unquestionably, believes that his toe can be made to see, will usually correct automatically a propensity to stumble.

Under the mental burden of these characteristic superstitions the blacks of the West Indies live continously. It is a part, and a very important part, of their lives. It is only too frequently concealed beneath the honest piety of primitive people, their genuine religious conviction and the regular practice of their religion.

In the minds of these simple people there is being waged always a silent, desperate battle between "Gahd" and His good angels, and the powers of darkness. This is no dry theological belief, of the sort ordinarily shelved in the minds of persons preoccupied otherwise by daily affairs, and with scant inclination to consider the matters of the spirit, whether good or evil. It is, rather, the literal condition under which ordinary life is lived. In the West Indies God and Satan are fighting out the destiny of mankind hand to hand, and the strange echoes of that desperate, incessant conflict resound in the preoccupied minds of the Negroes. In the daytime, under the glorious, reassuring sunlight of the Antilles, God reigns, in the minds of a grave but happy and carefree people. But after nightfall, even under the Caribbean moon, which seems twice as large and twice as near as the American moon, the evil powers come forth from their lurking dens variously to plague the children of Ham, accursed with a lingering, nameless fear—because their ancestor once dared to be so bold as to break a commandment and laugh at Noah his father.

Star Song

The star-enchanted
Walks in the night
In places near
To the sky's light.

He walks on the hills
And he is witness
Of the dark's wisdom,
Of the stars' sweetness.

He is never sorrowful,
Never lonely;
There is no heart in him,
But a star only.

MARIE DE L. WELCH.

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THE LAST IMPERIAL CHANCELLOR

By SOLOMON JUNEAU

OLD uniforms did service for Memorial Day. Most of them, of course, are not so very old—these millions of khaki coats spangled with fading service stripes, with clumsy bronzed buttons in irregular array. All testify to a struggle for which the United States prepared with a tremendous summons of hasty force, and which on the whole has, perhaps, been just as hastily and mightily forgotten. Why should we remember what was after all merely a surface wound? What is the glory of illustrious causes the significance of which was never assimilated? The abiding symbols—if even they abide—are a soldier unknown and a President misunderstood as well as misunderstanding. But in the old world the plow went pitilessly deep. There every turn of the worker's hand is still dictated by the fate of 1914. There the shadows of thrones are even yet respected and mourned. A whole generation is rendering homage to a most essential memory.

It might all have been different. This no one doubts who has investigated a little the currents of thought which bore the cargo of decision, or who has seen in perspective the confluence of world emotion at critical points. To such a one confirmation is offered by the volume of memoirs just published in Berlin by Prince Max of Baden, last German imperial chancellor. Many war books have come, adding their bit to the turgid narrative; but few have contributed so definitely to the final picture we shall have to form of the great conflict as the convincing and informative pages written by this "philanthropic prince." During the early years of the struggle he had devoted his energies to the fate of prisoners of war, lightening the burden of thousands of young fellows in all the armies, and using his influence with royalty in neutral countries to better conditions in detention camps everywhere. Soon he had come to represent to the world at large the high-minded, liberal section of German opinion.

The Prince turned to politics, he confides, as considerable of a novice. Gradually he felt his way into the circle which Paul Rohrbach had grouped more or less in the shadow of the German Foreign Office, and which (like Lord Landsdowne's party in England) was interested in carrying out a "political offensive" against the obstacles that barred the road to peace. This group, with which the Prince became definitely associated in 1917, was governed by the principle that the war must not be fought for its own sake but for certain ends which it was the business of political leadership to propose. Its task was difficult and even relatively incapable of accomplishment. Thus it opposed the attitude of the government to Mr. Wilson's peace note of 1916; it strained every nerve to prevent the declaration of intensified submarine warfare which led to the break with the United States; and it tried hard to get a definite declaration that Germany would not strive to annex Belgium in case of a decisive victory. But all these attempts failed for reasons which were partly bound up with the nature of war-time German government and partly with the constitutional weakness of prominent officials.

Then came the reign of Michaelis. As is well known, this epoch of "one hundred days" is characterized chiefly by the failure of Germany to respond immediately and cordially to the papal peace note. Recently an able apologist has declared that the Evangelical feeling of Michaelis himself was responsible for this fatal lack of courtesy and dignity. Prince Max, however, expresses the conviction that the incident was brought about primarily by the unwillingness of Von Kühlmann, secretary of foreign affairs, to surrender a "hostage" which would offset French claims upon Alsace-Lorraine at a peace conference then regarded as near at hand. He also feels that the right moment for an open declaration against the annexation of Belgium came rather with Lord Asquith's reference to this question in the House of Commons. Wherever the truth of the matter may lie, this discursive chapter is a document eminently worth reading. Prince Max castigates the Michaelis epoch severely, particularly for its reactionary attitude toward internal political affairs, its incompetent formalities and its repudiation of the spirit of leadership.

> In July, 1917, the Kaiser had the power, by reason of constitutional and traditional usage, to select the right man for the chancellor's office. If his choice had fallen upon someone who out of conviction stood for suffrage reform and a policy of no annexations, the majority of popular representatives cculd have been guided without recourse to any curtailment of liberty.

Personally I am inclined to agree that the defeat of Germany was sealed by the Michaelis government. The chance for a clear-cut military victory had, of course, long since gone by. But the world was tired of battle, the collapse of Russia seemed to offset the entry of the United States into the conflict, and the last great Ludendorff offensive had not yet squandered the force of the German troops. If the imperial government had acceded to the demands of the Reichstag majority; if it had instituted certain reforms in civil as well as military control; if it had answered the papal note and the inquiry of Lord Asquith promptly, generously and frankly—then the world would have been spared a year of war, the Russian revolution would have halted at the brink of communistic excesses, and the work of reconstruction would have been advanced by a decade. But the machine which had rolled ahead

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through several war-ridden years had lost all elasticity and power of adaptation.

The situation was not basically altered by the treaty with Russia, by the military operations of 1918, or by the accession of Count von Hertling to the office of chancellor. This good and intellectually great man was too old, too rigid and perhaps too academic for the desperate circumstances in which he found himself; and it is one of the conundrums of history that he clung to his post as long as he did. On October 1 of the final war year, Prince Max assumed the duties of the chancellorship and found that the army had already reached the decision to address President Wilson and seek an armistice. This proposal he quite properly viewed as disastrous, in view of the political consequences which must follow. But the commanding generals insisted that the fatal hour was struck, and the request for an armistice, coupled with an acceptance of the fourteen points, went out signed with the chancellor's name.

> The cause of a peace by agreement had been lost. Our plight could not be concealed from the outer world for twenty-four hours. The demand for an armistice acted like a miracle; nobody had expected such an overwhelming eventuality. Words and deeds of the German government were merely symptoms of the military situation.

What followed is history, but the detailed narration of Germany's actions during the critical weeks of the débâcle is certainly the most significant and original portion of Prince Max's book. Soon the business of government had been narrowed to stimulating the people of the Reich to a last resolute summoning of their forces in the interests of national self-defense. This more and more obviously depended, however, upon their attitude toward the Kaiser himself. Already during the middle of October Count Lerchenfeld had frankly told William II that there existed a growing demand for his abdication.

> His Majesty interrupted. He knew that many were asking that he step aside; but, he added very earnestly, a successor of Frederick the Great would do no such thing. On October 24, Noske attacked the Conservatives in the Reichstag by saying that their attitude could not alter the popular conviction that a single great gesture on the part of him who bore the crown would unburden the shoulders of millions.

The sentiment of opposition to the Kaiser grew with each day. Remarkable is the suspense created by this succinct, matter-of-fact narrative—on the one hand the iron necessities of the situation, on the other the blindness of the sovereign to obvious realities. This antithesis was plain to many clear-sighted statesmen, but no one had the courage to approach William with a brutal statement of the facts. The Hessian prince upon whom the chancellor had placed all his hopes, refused at the last moment to undertake the painful mission. Meanwhile the Socialist party, long faithful to the war-ridden government, began to descry unmistakable evidences of revolution. The drift to Soviet principles was apparent; and with that the will to resist, to carry on for another bitter month, was dissipated. On November 6, Ebert demanded the abdication of the Kaiser, "if the government wished to prevent the masses from going over wholesale into the revolutionary camp." Even yet, however, the military authorities did not grasp the political situation. To them the Kaiser was the commander-in-chief, who could not surrender before the army did. To an official request from the Cabinet which followed the next day, His Majesty replied that he considered it his "duty to remain at his post." Meanwhile the Socialist leaders were experiencing the greatest difficulty in keeping their followers in check. As a matter of fact, the revolution was already triumphant.

Prince Max's final personal effort to induce the emperor to bow to implacable fate was unsuccessful. He declares:

> I had no hope. The Kaiser was firmly convinced that the regular army could be depended upon even when there was question of defending his person against popular feeling. At the time I could only assume that the military command shared his optimism. Today I know that an hour after my conversation had taken place, Von Hindenburg and General Gröner had come to the joint conclusion: the Kaiser's idea of restoring order at home was futile. They had discovered a fact which uprooted all their calculations—a division of fighting troops, commissioned to defend the rear against revolutionists, had refused to obey its officers and had marched home.

The Kaiser was not immediately informed of this development, however; and Prince Max records his temptation to announce the abdication on his own responsibility.

On November 9, the popular demand had become more emphatic. Now it was no longer a question of the Kaiser but of the coming republic. Troops in Berlin refused to oppose rebellious crowds, there was a constant stream of revolutionary news from all parts of the empire. William's formal abdication and Scheidemann's proclamation of the republic were almost simultaneous. Even yet, however, the Kaiser had not seen light. "His Majesty is ready," declared the official document, "to abdicate as German kaiser but not as king of Prussia." Under the old German constitution, the king of Prussia automatically became German kaiser! A few hours later, Ebert was proclaimed chancellor. What followed is dramatic enough:

> Between five and six o'clock [November 9] I went to Ebert to take my departure.
>
> He said to me: "I earnestly request you to remain."
>
> I asked: "For what purpose?"
>
> Ebert replied: "I wish you would remain as gerent of the realm."
>
> This request had been made to me during the last hours of my stay in office by a number of my fellow-officials. I

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said to Ebert: "I know that you are about to effect an agreement with the Independent Socialists, and with them I cannot work in common."

Before going out, I turned and said: "Herr Ebert, I confide the German nation to your heart."

He replied, "I have lost two sons for it."

I think this shred of reminiscence, honoring the memory of Germany's first President, is representative of the character of Prince Max's book. His object as an aristocrat, a public servant and a statesman was to coöperate loyally with the public forces interested in a principled development of the nation's welfare. In so far as the book has an argumentative scheme, it is this: Germany's débâcle was due largely to misunderstanding of public opinion as an operative force. Everything was sacrificed to immediate military requirements, no use was made of that "political elasticity" which is as productive of vitality as it is a testimonial to vitality. As events proceeded, the empire failed to make use of four critical moments—it neglected to issue a frank statement regarding its attitude toward Belgium, in which British and American opinion was vitally interested; it refused to halt unrestricted submarine warfare, staking every hope on a sharp, speedy military victory rather than upon a slower but more effective political sentiment; it failed to effect the abdication of the Kaiser at a moment when he had become the symbol of militaristic autocracy both at home and abroad; and its negotiations with Russia were futile exercises in old-fashioned diplomacy which came at a time when supreme, generous statesmanship was in order.

Historians may question the pertinence of these conclusions, and it is of course too late to put them into practice. It is, however, well worth knowing that wartime Germany had a group of prominent men who believed in them and tried to reach them. Prince Max of Baden was certainly on the right road, however quixotic his attempts to travel on it may have been. He felt, rightly no doubt, that his reputation for humanitarian, idealistic enterprise was something of a personal asset to the empire and might serve it well in the gloomy days of approaching defeat. In an agreeable manner his book shows how many of the lesser German rulers stood with him in principle and practice, thus strongly offsetting the wholly military and autocratic views of the chief Hohenzollern. Never before, it seems to me, has an authoritative statement of war history revealed more clearly the part played by Prussia and the Kaiser in the German catastrophe. This part is not that constructed by popular enemy imagination, but it is large and calamitous enough to establish an historical verdict. Naturally a great deal might be said in criticism of the Prince's views. It is as easy to disagree after the making of history as during the period of its making. To differ with Germany's last imperial chancellor, however, will, it seems, remain definitely dependent upon conceding his right to speak authoritatively.

THE SILENT LESSON

By FÉLIX KLEIN

AT FIRST sight it might seem that the silent lesson, or, as it might quite as well be called, the still lesson, would be very unpopular with young children, of all creatures the most naturally restless. As a matter of fact, whenever it has been intelligently tried, it amuses them to such a degree that they beg for its repetition again and again. One of the glories of Madame Montessori is that her name has become attached to this ingenious innovation. Nevertheless she was not its inventor. The Froebel Institute had already used it for a long time in their schools. But it is only fair to add that, by laying down the most practical and meticulous rules for it, she gave the experiment the character it now possesses of a ceremony dignified by imposing ritual gestures.

Take a glance at a class of very young children just before the signal for silence is given. It hums with puerile activities like some hive of bees. Here a little mite is concentrated on pushing buttons through their proper button-holes. A bigger boy is grouping scraps of color in their prismatic order. A knot of girls and boys are gathered around a table, turning over a book with large colored prints. Others are writing, the pencil held in a convulsive fist, the tongue stretched out to its full extent, every attitude, as the clumsy strokes are made, eloquent of naïve and spasmodic effort.

Suddenly the teacher takes up a piece of chalk. On the blackboard she traces in big letters a word that perhaps only two or three of her pupils can read, but of which all recognize the familiar aspect. Silence! The children cease their occupations immediately. They close their eyes and hide their faces in folded hands. All noise ceases. Silence spreads like the ripple on water into which a stone has been flung. One little man was building a tower with red bricks when the signal was given. He stays on his knees, his eyes shut tight, his whole body rigid with the effort to make no move. Not one of sixty little feet grate on the floor, not a chair creaks. Life ceases, and silence takes possession of all things, animate and inanimate. It grows and grows until space seems to be filled with it to the brim. The children feel and understand it. It becomes a living presence. In not one of these small and nervous creatures does a desire to make the slightest movement survive. Instincts are held in check, desires lulled to sleep, peace descends upon passion, the entire being becomes static. And the darkness in which these tiny children have plunged themselves by placing their hands over their eyes, becomes the guardian of this voluntary immobility.

Silence! How immense is its influence upon the multitude! The moving and voluntary silence of these little children! The immense and sudden stillness that descends upon a tumultuous crowd when a great orator holds its emotions within his hands. The architectural silence of a vast audience spellbound by the witchery of

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a violin. Cathedrals and sanctuaries! The profound religious abyss of silence when the hushed congregation bows its head before the uplifted Host. The sanctuary bell tinkles, the tick of a clock becomes audible as it measures the seconds of which time is made. Miraculous power of silence to blend the hearts of men in a common fervor!

This silent lesson, as it is carried out in the Montessori classes, often surprises strangers who are witness to it. They cannot but wonder at the authority of a teacher who is able to impose her will so absolutely. But the teacher does not place her reliance on prestige. It is enough for her to bid each child repeat today, as he or she has repeated it at each lesson, the gestures which he or she made yesterday. She has no temptation to add anything to the order of procedure. It is sufficient for her purpose to have it understood that each child shall cease his task and close his eyes immediately the moment the order for silence is given. Each gesture is perfect in itself. Not one is superfluous. All impose stillness. The final one renders silence inevitable. Taken together, they exhibit an extraordinary instance of the power of signals and gestures over the human passions. It is simply by applying a ritual order categorically and imperatively, that Mme. Montessori has succeeded in obtaining that perfect immobility from which a fruitful silence is born. The child pupil finds a fresh pleasure in the experience each time it is repeated, almost as though the transient quiescence were felt as a rest and solace to the incessant turmoil of his growth.

It is moments such as these, when the passions suspend their clamor and man hearkens to the rhythm of eternal and universal life, that God chooses to speak the word of salvation. Forgetting his individual destiny, his whole soul an oblation, the creature becomes part of creation, coherent to the humanity of which he is an infinitesimal integer. It is when they take part in the sacrament of silence that men feel themselves to be interpreters, and, so to speak, the conscience of the inanimate world, heirs and debtors of heroes who sacrificed themselves that they might live, brothers of all men, and sons of the same Heavenly Father.

Entering into silence means leaving appearance behind to attain reality: it means penetrating the surface to reach the depth: it means union with God, Who is present everywhere, sustains everything, and is the Alpha and Omega of our universe. Over and over again, in the sacred writings, He has told us that He does not manifest Himself in the thunder and the tempest, but in "the still small voice" heard only by those who listen with their soul. Before the face of the Creator the only attitude that becomes the creature is the silence of love and adoration: Sileat omnis caro a facie Domini. It is this that the children, who were bidden approach Him without hindrance, feel, even though they do not understand. It is this that makes the silent lesson so grateful an experience to their virginal and impulsive little hearts.

MOON, TIDE AND WEATHER

By WILLIAM EVERETT CRAM

OUTDOOR work has ever been domineered over by the weather, and men watched for and cherished every sign which might be used again in order to foretell the weather of the morrow. Now work is largely indoors and rest and recreation outdoors, and the daily forecasts of the Weather Bureau are the chief dependence; still, personal observation and local weather lore have their value when used in connection with the official predictions.

I have lived almost wholly out of doors, and fifty years of careful observation leave me convinced that the moon has a great deal to do with it; that is to say locally, right here on this section of the New England coast, and I imagine along all the other reaches of the coast, as well. There has hardly been a month in the last half-century that I have not watched the waxing and waning of the moon in connection with the present subject. I have found nothing in the way of verification of the belief that the weather would be wet or dry according as the position of the new moon in the west at sundown was erect or reclining. On the other hand, the old saying that between the first quarter and the full you can pretty safely count on fine weather, but that when you do get a storm at such times it will prove heavy and long drawn out, has very seldom failed. The Weather Bureau has stated over and over that the precipitation is about the same year by year during the various stages of the moon; which proves nothing one way or the other. The greater severity of those rare storms which come at the full, would, I should say, just about counterbalance the long stretches of fair weather which may generally be looked for at such times.

Whether it is the moon or the tide or the following sea wind, I do not know, but something at that time most certainly holds back the weather, checking its advance across the country from the west, so that fair or foul continues while the moon is big. I have studied daily the general forecasts of the Weather Bureau that give the positions of the areas of high and low barometer the country over, and almost invariably between the first quarter and the full, these slow up as they approach our seacoast and inlets of the tide. If clear skies then get foothold here, they hold possession until after the moon is full, and it is the same with storms, whether of rain or snow.

Thunder-storms—even more than the wide-spread, slow-moving areas of precipitation—appear to be under the dominion of the moon. One summer afternoon when I was a boy, my father and I walked across lots to the Curtis farm and bought a cow. While we talked the matter over and gossiped of neighborhood affairs, a low mutter of thunder in the west caused my father to say, "We had better be going before that thunder-shower gets here." Dr. Curtis glanced up at the moon in its first quarter, half-way up the eastern sky, and replied, "You needn't hurry, William. Though you live to be a hundred, you'll never see a thunder-shower come up against the moon." I watched that growling thunderhead pile up, then fade away and disperse in scattered ranks of fleecy clouds, and from that day to this I have never seen a thunder-shower "come up against the moon." In this particular locality nearly all the thunder-showers come down from the west or west-northwest, and are quite as frequently seen making up there when the moon is in the east as at any other time, but once the moon has climbed above the eastern skyline we can safely leave our hay in windrows as far as any danger of getting it wet is concerned. The showers either back away below the western horizon, split and

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go north and south, or else climb half-way up the sky and then break up.

The heaviest thunder-showers that we ever get come down from the west or northwest just as the moon (nearing the full) is still below the eastern horizon. Usually they do not appear ominous at first, but gather force as they approach, piling up overhead and hanging there, sometimes for hours, with vivid, almost incessant lightning, and thunder that shakes the earth. At times, though very rarely, the offshore wind succeeds in pushing them over, down into the east, the western sky begins to clear and then as the moon rises the clouds bank up and back inland; then the worst is yet to come. After the full, and until the first quarter of the next lunar month, the weather is apt to be more variable and uncertain as the areas of high and low barometer pass in quick succession unimpeded. Rain or fair are then likely to be of short duration. The long storms, those "three-day storms," whether of snow or rain, come near the full. I have never experienced one of these at any other time. A storm of quick passage across the inland country arrives on the coastline and to all appearances is held almost stationary there.

Concerning the moon's power at the full of dispersing the clouds, my observation is as follows: When the moon is rising or half-way up the eastern sky, the clouds thin out and scatter on all sides. When the moon is in the west, clear sky and clouds are separated by a clear-cut line, "just as if you had sliced it down with a knife," as I heard one farmer say. It is a commonplace saying hereabouts, that early frosts come on the full. I am inclined to think that they do as a rule, though not by any means invariably. The early hoar frosts of autumn generally come in still, clear weather, just in front of the cloudy area which precedes rain, and the power which the waxing moon seems to possess of retarding the approach of the rain-clouds furnishes just the conditions for still, clear, frosty nights, but it may be that the slight increase of heat reflected from the sunlit face of the moon at that time partially offsets this. As to whether it is the moon's power of attraction on the clouds that rules the weather, or the incoming tide that follows the moon and is itself accompanied by the wind from off the ocean, who shall say?

As I look down into the water of sea or lake or river, I notice that the aquatic life just beneath the wave is in the shadow; the water around and above it is thick and murky with sediment and sand stirred up by the wave's movement. After the wave has passed by, the water becomes clear and quiet and the daylight penetrates to the bottom, granting the fish a glimpse of sun and sky until the next wave comes along.

We live like ground fish and crabs on the mud beneath an ocean. The ocean above them is salt sea water; the ocean above us is atmospheric air. Both the ocean of water and the ocean of air are forever upheaved by an endless series of waves with shallow troughs between. On one slope of each sea wave the water is ascending, on the other descending, and the same is true of the waves of atmosphere. As the blue-fish, herring and mackerel swim at mid-depths or near the surface of their ocean far above the eel and cod and halibut, so the hawks—like the airmen—sail at mid-depths in the ocean of air above us. In the falling atmosphere at the front of the wave they fly heavily with labored beating of the wings; on the other slope of the wave they sail upward without effort on the ascending air. Every gunner knows that before a storm the ducks and geese fly low with great apparent effort, whether the winds are high or still, with or against them. After the height of the storm has passed, we may frequently observe that migrating birds of every sort are flying near the ground to avoid an opposing wind, but the effort to keep aloft is no longer evident; on the contrary, at such times they often appear to be borne upward against their will, and may be seen from time to time driving downward to escape the gale.

This is exactly what we should be led to expect if we were to reverse the present-day theory of atmospheric pressure which holds that when the barometer is high, we are under the crest of the wave, and when it is low, we are in the trough or hollow between two crests. The birds dispute this theory by rising when the barometer is high and flying low and with much effort when it is falling. Also the smoke, whether from campfire or factory chimney, disputes it, by rising upward when the barometer is high, and sinking earthward with a falling barometer. The faintest breath of air pushes the smoke this way or that, and it is beyond my power of comprehension to understand how it could possibly rise when the air is falling or sink when it is rising. Yet I know of no weather sign that is more dependable or more generally marked by outdoor folk. When the smoke beats down to the ground, a storm is coming on and you may look for rain or snow—except, of course, in times of drought, when all signs fail.

COMMUNICATIONS

THE LAY THINKER

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—The lay reader, whom Mr. Henry Morton Robinson writes about in The Commonweal of May 11, has, it seems to me, become the lay thinker and talker. If the testimony of an outsider is of any value, I beg to say that the existence of a Catholic movement in Columbia is more evident each time I go near Newman Hall. Only, and here my impressions necessarily differ from Mr. Robinson's, the movement is patent to me in the arguments and conversations of the students. Now whether the boys get their ideas from reading the Fathers or from the spirit of the English and history departments of the university, I cannot say.

But since The Commonweal expresses itself as being "frankly puzzled by the lack of overt evidence for the movement," it may be of interest to point out just exactly what overt evidence there is to be had by casual observation.

The most striking phenomenon to be studied at Columbia is the Sunday morning conference held after the eleven o'clock Mass. Here are to be found as many students as can possibly be crammed into the small chapel. Since it is sometimes difficult even to breathe in the crowd, it may justifiably be assumed that the boys and girls come for the love of the discussion, and not for reasons of convenience.

Free will, determinism, evil in the world, psychoanalysis, ecclesiasticism, infallibility, and all the "timely topics" in the intellectual world today, are discussed with a temper worthy of the boasted mediaeval university. The students are hot in defense of the Faith. They raise all sorts of objections to Catholic teaching, just to clear up difficult points. The weak of faith must be helped by the fearless, open facing of questions. Sometimes the boys get quite excited; more often they are fearfully deliberate and calm. A budding lawyer quotes Saint Thomas; his handsome neighbor holds forth out of Saint Augustine. Pope Leo is also a favorite authority.

Where these young people get their knowledge, I do not know. Perhaps it was these, or the teachers of these, who formerly did the reading which now bears fruit in apologetics, viva voce, instead of in written treatise.

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For another piece of "overt evidence," I might mention a Barnard conference I was one day privileged to attend. There were about twenty girls, all grappling with tremendous problems, fundamentals of philosophy and theology, and what was their attitude? Again I saw that almost passionate desire, as Mr. Robinson puts it, "to plumb this inexhaustible sea of poetry and philosophy, and to become familiar with the best that has been thought and said concerning the great mysteries and beauties of the Faith"; that "fresh realization of the priceless heritage that the Church confers on her humblest aspirants—a heritage not only of sacramental grace, and of superb liturgical poetry addressed to the eye and ear, but a concrete body of culture as well, sufficient to sustain the most active intelligence and efficacious to soothe the most turbulent spirit."

That this spirit of enthusiasm for the Faith has not sooner borne noticeable literary fruit is not astonishing. Until recently the Catholic layman lived in the chill state of being continually wet-blanketed. That era seems happily to be definitely of the past.

I can but wonder what the result would be if there were coöperation between the Catholic and non-Catholic colleges. Exchange courses, exchange professors, between, let us say, Columbia, Fordham and the Catholic University, would almost necessarily give impetus to Young Catholics. The faith of the Catholic students, of course, requires abundant nourishment, probably far more than a Newman Club or "conferences" can ever hope to supply. And it is expecting a great strength of initiative in a student, when we leave him to ferret out his Catholic sources for himself. If these little groups of ardent Catholics at Columbia wanted it very seriously, is it not probable that they could get the university to provide them with a professor, let us say, in "sources of Catholic literature"? One wonders what professorial talent there is available at such places as Fordham, talent which could be lent to Columbia Catholics. If Columbia exchanges professors with half the universities and colleges of Europe, why should she not do likewise with American Catholic universities and colleges?

KATHERINE BYLES.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION

Yonkers, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—It is suggested by your correspondent, William H. Bastion, in The Commonweal of May 4 on the unemployment situation, that I give some detailed suggestions upon this most difficult phase of our industrial life.

To avoid as much as possible any controversy in this matter, and only wishing to be helpful as your correspondent suggests, I include the recommendation of the committee representing the American Federation of Labor, at the conference called by President Harding at the suggestion of Mr. Hoover, because of the terrible unemployment situation following the war. The committee's recommendation is as follows:

"We cannot hope to eliminate unemployment in the immediate future. It is necessary, then, that labor reaffirm its remedial program and put renewed energy into the effort to secure each separate measure of the program.

"First: Initial objective in that program is a federal employment service, competently organized and adequately financed. Such an agency is necessary to bring job and workman together and to supply unemployment data necessary for intelligent planning by management and labor. The United States is practically the only important industrial country that has not established such an extensive and efficient business and humanitarian

TWO TIMELY PAMPHLETS

SHOULD A CATHOLIC BE PRESIDENT?

Editorials, Articles, and Other Comment from The Commonweal on the Smith-Marshall Controversy.

OBLIGATIONS TO AMERICA

By CARLTON J. H. HAYES

These two Commonweal pamphlets which are really complimentary to each other, should be read by every intelligent Catholic. In, Should a Catholic Be President, the open letter from the editors of The Commonweal in reply to Mr. Charles C. Marshall's letter to Governor Smith, Dr. John A. Ryan's article, Church, State, and Constitution, together with important editorials and correspondence, printed in The Commonweal, have been combined in a pamphlet that is a complete answer to religious intolerance.

Professor Hayes in Obligations to America gives the clearest and most significant summary of the debt of the United States to the spiritual forces, the philosophy, and the social ideas of Catholicism, ever presented in such brief form. At the same time he brings out in bold relief, the obligations of Catholics to this nation and the service they are called upon to give.

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service. The employment service developed during the war emergency ought to have been intelligently reorganized instead of being scrapped by a short-sighted Congress. We should seek at once proper legislation and adequate appropriation for such a service.

"Second: We recognize that the only way to eliminate unemployment is to start the wheels of industry, and to provide employment for workers. The most desirable result is to provide employment for each person at his preferred trade or calling. This means to keep in motion the wheels of industry. Every industry must support its workers. If a given industry fails to support its workers, the industrial problem cannot be solved by trying to find some other occupations for these workers. Public works cannot help the unemployed in the needle trades, or the cigar trade or the printing shops. But each industry must take care of its own workers including the reserve force it requires. This problem can be solved by those directly concerned. To this end there should be organized in each craft or calling a national conference board of an equal number of employers' representatives and representatives of international trade-unions, assisted by such expert advice and counsel as the Department of Labor and the Department of Commerce may be able to give to these boards. Anyone who gives more than casual study to the determining factors in production, finds that the service motive is allowed a very restricted influence entirely out of proportion to its nature. Although things should be produced for use, the needs of society have not a final determining voice in deciding output, as disinterested consideration of the question of output would indicate that the needs of society ought to be made the basis for guiding production. Change in controlling policies cannot be effected by law. It will be the result of developing intelligence and by the force of public opinion together with demonstrations of its practicability.

"Third: An indirect way to stimulate industry in periods of depression is to provide for the expansion of public works and public highways, with the development of such cycles. We recognize that public works and such productive public investments are not primarily expedients to relieve unemployment but should be an integral part of a definite national program for conservation and development. However, execution of parts of such a program can very properly and with economic advantages parallel periods of economic depression. Extension of credit to investment projects of such a character will be based upon absolutely sound security."

The committee also underscores the need for expansion and standardization of statistics by the Department of Labor. It urges especially periodic and prompt publication of the facts about the following key industries: Raw wool and woolen textiles, raw cotton and cotton textiles, hides and leather shoes, iron and steel and leading fabricated products of each: zinc, lead and copper and leading products of each, and bituminous coal. A section of great practical value discusses the use of construction work as a balance-wheel for business. If all branches of our public works and the construction work of our utilities—the railways, telephones and others—could systematically put aside financial reserves to be provided in times of prosperity for the deliberate purpose of improvement and expansion in times of depression, we should not only decrease the depth of depressions, but we should at the same time diminish the height of booms. This utilization of government projects as an employment reserve, so far as possible, by which demand for labor and materials may be stimulated during depression, is now being made a part of the government's policy.

WILLIAM COLLINS.

IMPERIALISM AND WORLD POLITICS

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—Professor Parker Thomas Moon, of Columbia, added some time ago another volume to the series of analyses and warnings that he and Professor Carlton Hayes have given us in the past few years on the subject of nationalism and imperialism, those two most powerful molding forces of the past generation, which led straight into the war of 1914-18 and will lead straight to war again if the way out is not found. The best review, of course, would come from a brother analyst. Nevertheless, the book is of particular interest to those who participated in the doings Mr. Moon describes. It is a curious and interesting feeling to be analyzed twenty-five years or so after the event, and to find that today one would have an authoritative backing in attempting to find and develop a solution for the backward state which was totally lacking then.

In the period from 1896 to 1904 no one living the events of the Far East was clearly conscious of what was going on. Not only I was not, as a young diplomat; no one was, for it is true, and subsequent observation proves it, that the individual is caught up by forces in diplomacy, just as he is in battle, and goes along, doing more or less mechanically and automatically the things that are to be done, without any clear knowledge of what it is all about. When I was thrust into what Mr. Moon very accurately calls "the battle of concessions," I thought that being a greenhorn I alone was ignorant of the game, but it came to me soon and rather forcefully that my seniors did not know more than a step ahead. Later I found that congressmen and members of Parliament did not know; then, that secretaries of state and Presidents did not know, and finally that emperors and czars knew nothing at all; all were caught up in a mad rush, comparable to a land rush of homesteaders, or a gold rush —and we are watching today the consequences of what things were done then against common justice.

The diplomat, contrary to common belief, and his own portentous gravity of mien, does not possess omniscience. M. Maurice Paléologue to the contrary notwithstanding, nobody knew what stands in his admirable diary of war happenings at Petersburg on the dates upon which he set it down. The key comes much later, when the documents are out. The historian after the event comes closer to the truth, but he never has the thrill of living it blindly. The diplomat often does live history; the historian takes the paper work long after and analyzes what the diplomat has done as shown in the record. The perfect combination might be that of a statesman-historian if one could be quite sure the statesman was not trying to rearrange his blind blunders in the light of history. People did not speak of nationalism twenty-five years ago, but of national honor, national interests, and they felt rather solemn about it. They did not speak of imperialism quite so currently, and when Americans did they felt a stir of pride: it meant that America had arrived and must be treated with respect.

It seems now rather a middle-aged thing to do, to discover that there was no romance after all in the game of empire building—with someone else's land and with people who did not know the game and were themselves the stakes. The one was thought something of a misfit then who sympathized strongly with the natives; he was an obstacle to national policy, which was rather a dreadful thing to be; to be sent home, in the opinion of some; to be permanently disposed of, in the opinion of others; to be given a reputation for unorthodoxy, in any case, which would cling though the cause be long since forgotten. Mr. Moon's Imperialism and World Politics brings up

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very vivid memories of a stirring even though somewhat sordid time; the period of "the strong citadels [he calls them] of self-seeking imperialism. . . . About those citadels there hangs a mist, obscuring unsightly facts and lending glamour to illusions. . . . Once the fog is dissipated, perhaps those citadels of narrow vision will vanish and in their place mankind may establish an edifice in which enlightened national interest and humane internationalism may be at one, and in peace."

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

(The volume which is the subject of Mr. Sand's interesting letter was reviewed in The Commonweal of January 5, by Professor Charles G. Fenwick—The Editors.)

INGENIOUSLY WRONG

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—I nominate for the booby prize of 1927 in the department of book-reviewing, Mr. John Chamberlain for his critique of Chesterton's The Return of Don Quixote (Times Book Review, May 1) in which occurs the phrase: "With all the complex resources of a mind as devious as that of Saint Thomas Aquinas. . . ."

Can anyone match the misplacement of objectives achieved in the conjunction of "devious" with "the mind of Saint Thomas Aquinas"? What a gorgeous background of spacious ignorance it discloses!

THOMAS F. WOODLOCK.

P. S. Why not start a competition to find out how near to it your readers can come? I offer a prize of $5.00 to the winner if the judicious Mr. Chamberlain will consent to act as judge.

T. F. W.

P. P. S. Please consider the foregoing P. S. an entry in the competition.

T. F. W.

THE SMITH-MARSHALL CONTROVERSY

Newark, N. J.

TO the Editor:—So much has been said in praise of Governor Smith's epic reply to Mr. Marshall's open letter that nothing I might say could augment the deserved commendations. Mr. Marshall has been answered fairly, adequately and on every point. To my mind, it seems that he cannot justly present any further arguments in support of his beliefs or suspicions.

Let the opposing forces now bring forward their "wet" issue; but I believe that Mr. Smith has stilled (temporarily, at least) the bogey slogan, "No Catholic shall rule the White House," which springs originally from people who prate about tolerance.

ELSIE A. GALIK.

AS MAN TO MAN

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—In your issue of May 4, there is a review of Dr. Condé Pallen's latest book, As Man to Man, which seems to me to miss its essential characteristic.

The book is in no sense a diary, but a unique presentation of Catholic doctrine in a human and popular fashion, bringing dry and abstract truth to the comprehension of the man in the street, and engaging his interest by its novelty. It is something new in apologetics, not in the matter, but in the manner of treatment.

I write this, not as a criticism of your review, but merely as a supplement to it.

C. F. BROWN.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Triple Crossed

SOMEHOW it seems as if anyone named Merlin ought to write a good mystery play. In fact there is no good reason why an utterly thrilling mystery should not be written around the character of the original Merlin, taking a cue from Mark Twain. However that may be, F. S. Merlin has written in Triple Crossed a mystery which, except for the first scene, goes The Spider one better in mixing up audience and stage.

Perhaps because of the similarity of method, the program is careful to note that Mr. Merlin's play was copyrighted in 1922—thus forestalling the criticism that he had hastily copied the formula of The Spider and tried to capitalize on that undoubted success. That formula consists, as nearly everyone now knows, in having actors planted throughout the audience, and in having a seemingly legitimate play interrupted by a supposed accident, in which the audience soon becomes involved. In the case of The Spider, which took itself very seriously, the reaction from the first surprise was very much of an anti-climax, permitting the audience to snicker when the lines called for shivers and chills. Moreover, there were awkward moments in The Spider when a shifting of scenery broke right through the attempted illusion. Triple Crossed improves on these crudities by having only one stage set and by offering reasonable excuses for the dropping of the curtain. It also gains by a certain pervading sense of casual comedy, so that even when the audience is thoroughly on to the trick of the plot, it can still be amused at the succession of devices used to continue the suspense, instead of laughing outright when it is supposed to be solemn or horrified.

In spite of these improvements on The Spider, however, there is no doubt that Triple Crossed shares with its chief competitor the handicap of a wrong conception of the theatre. You cannot persistently sweep the audience into the action of the play without destroying the basic illusion that is the theatre. This is said with all due reverence for the attempts of more serious producers—as in The Miracle—to extend the sphere of illusion. The feeblest moments of The Miracle were surely the times when characters of the play swept through the audience and when one was acutely conscious of grease paint and costume. The idea that a picture needs a frame is more than an arbitrary convention. It springs from the plain human fact that we can identify ourselves more easily with something set well apart from us than with something surrounding us too closely.

The theatre is driving at the illusion of reality, and illusion, like a great dream, demands distance, quiet, and every aid to concentration. Even the ordinary intermission is a serious theatrical problem, met generally by creating a situation of such marked suspense at the end of each act that the audience is given enough acute anticipation to carry it over the period of broken illusion. The trick employed in Triple Crossed is the kind that can work only on the first night, and then only for a few minutes. Even if the critics maintain partial silence, word of mouth gossip is enough to put the subsequent audiences on their guard. At best, the possible illusion can last only for a few seconds. After that the spell is broken, the attempted illusion becomes just buffoonery, and the audience henceforth is amused only at the ingenuity of the author. There is, after all, nothing so effective as a play that stays on the stage. Neither The Spider nor Triple Crossed can compare for an instant in real power to the illusion of mystery created by The Bat.

The Last Grand Street Follies

AS THE last of the Grand Street Follies will be on the boards only a few days more, and as the Neighborhood Playhouse will then close its doors for all time, we must accept this fifth edition of Grand Street pranks more as an occasion for lament and farewell than as a performance to be measured on its own account.

The censored dramatic fare of the last season furnishes the greater part of the material for satire, and these Follies partake largely and in Rabelaisian mood of the very things they satirize. A deal of rough stuff gets thrown about the stage, not without a flare of obvious wit, but without any special effort to improve on Broadway standards. It is one of those evenings we politely call sophisticated when we try to pretend that dirt ceases to be dirt as soon as it is written or uttered by people of nimble intelligence instead of by traveling salesmen. In the occasional interludes, when real wit is allowed to have its turn, Miss Agnes Morgan as librettist and the company at large show just how piercingly good they can be when they make the effort. In other words, a few of the numbers are among the best the Neighborhood has ever staged. Such is the rule of contrast!

As this is the last occasion when this particular group will appear together, perhaps the most useful tribute to pay is a comment on the individual actors. Albert Carroll, in his impersonations of Mrs. Fiske and Ethel Barrymore, reaches the summit of his many achievements. His genius is an odd one. He is singularly bad in so-called straight parts, but the moment you give him a very definite character to attack or the chance for a female impersonation, he manages somehow to get so completely inside his part as to create an almost perfect illusion. As Mrs. Fiske, for example, he makes almost no effort through make-up to counterfeit that venerable lady. But he does achieve the essence of her voice and mannerisms so exactly as to leave one bewildered and convulsed. If only he would be content to hold to this line of work as his specialty, his artistic future would be secure and inimitable.

Dorothy Sands may have some difficulty in convincing uptown managers of her amazing versatility because of their penchant for type casting. In the last two years she has been given many parts which, for her, became triumphs of sheer audacity. The perfection with which, in this review, she has caught the foibles of Jane Cowl and Laura Hope Crews should go far toward confirming in the public or managerial mind the amazing technical excellence of her work. Three other members of the company who have shown steadily improving ability are Paula Trueman, Lily Lubell, and the diminutive Sadie Sussman. Miss Trueman has all the makings of a very competent actress in her own right, plus a rare ability at mimicry. Miss Lubell has a habit of doing whatever is assigned to her neatly and well, while Sadie Sussman deserves a recognized place on Broadway for the comic and satirical quality of her rapid-fire dancing.

Of the men of the company, aside from Albert Carroll, the most conspicuous members have been Otto Hulicius and Marc Loebell. Mr. Loebell has shown a distinct improvement in the last year, gaining in poise and diction and range. He has still, however, and shares with Mr. Hulicius, an occasional and distressing amateurish quality. Both of them would benefit enormously from work under such a director as Guthrie McClintic, but of the two, it is probably Mr. Hulicius who will

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accomplish the most. His use of make-up is always effective, his stage presence and voice are naturally good, and he shows promise of flexibility. It is very sad to know that so much good talent will henceforth have to fare along separate roads.

Oh, Ernest!

ONE of the brightest comedies in the English language, The Importance of Being Earnest, by Oscar Wilde, now makes its appearance as a Broadway musical comedy under the above abbreviated title. Possibly someone remembered that Shaw's Arms and the Man once masqueraded successfully as The Chocolate Soldier. Or perhaps someone merely had a nightmare. Who knows? Whatever the origin of the present venture, the result is deplorable.

The fault is by no means that of the principal actors. The whole idea was born wrong, and a desolate and incompetent chorus of about eight young ladies adds measurably to the discord. The whole point is that the Wilde comedy is one of mood and lines rather than action. To convert it successfully into a musical comedy would mean discarding practically all the original dialogue and substituting for it a libretto of fairly crude and obvious action. Instead, someone has tried to keep the play almost intact, and to do the conversion simply by inserting songs and dances here and there. Of course the only effect of these songs is to interrupt the mood, smash the sequence of wit, and destroy all semblance of characterization.

My memory of The Chocolate Soldier is hazy, to say the least, but from the outset it was, as I recall, a farce packed with action. There was little or no attempt to keep the refinements of Shavian wit. The characters were exaggerated into caricatures, until the whole production became a vehicle for song and slap-stick comedy. Only the thread of plot remained to identify the source of the story. Someone with an ounce of judgment and common sense might have done the same thing with the Wilde comedy. There is, in the story of this young man who tries to keep two identities going at once, more than the average amount of musical comedy plot. But to try to mix the subtleties of Wilde drawing-room dialogue with the crude formula of a regulation musical show is like pouring old cognac into beer.

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SONNETS

Fantasy

Rain in the lilacs, now—yet this has seemed
Less like a summer than a dream of summer;
And this wide, scented dusk, like something dreamed,
Returns about one ghostly later-comer
Who is not I at all, but one who strays
Back through a twilight that is old and dim
With earlier shapes that wander later days,
And all but touch and all but speak to him.

The rain has freed the lilacs of a scent
Too like the soul of other summers, here,
Trembling and sweet with all that they had meant
For two, returning now, so very near
Their whisper stirs this dark, their eager word,
Sensed in these haunted airs, is all but heard.

DAVID MORTON.

Aspiration

Her dreams she folded, smoothed, and packed with care,
Then closed the lid and turned the heavy key.
Her fingers lingered wistfully, while she
Said half aloud, "Some day and I shall dare
To turn this lock again. Then I shall wear
These dreams of mine—but now it cannot be,
And I must wait. How he would laugh at me
And at my dreams! No one will find them there."

Upon the chest the idle years shed dust,
And over it fat spiders plied their trade.
One day she climbed the stair. From near her heart
She drew the key. The hinges groaned with rust.
She took her dreams, now bold and unafraid;
But at her touch they crumbled all apart.

GERTRUDE RYDER BENNETT.

To a Day

Lean back, O day, upon the breast of night,
And close your dreaming eyes, and sleep . . . ah, sleep!
Now is the hour of silence. Now delight
And sadness touch, and bow their heads, and weep. . . .
Then fold your pale, sweet hands, O day, and close
Your eyes and rest, nor fear lest anything
Disturb the quiet depth of your repose,
For from this sleep there is no wakening.

But in the dawn with you upon the hills
I walked, O day, and your fair hair, unbound,
Was sunlight in the wind, and daffodils
Started beneath your footprint on the ground!
Yet I remember . . . once you paused, and said,
"Will you forget me, youth, when I am dead?"

MARY DIXON THAYER.

The Funeral Procession

A year ago the Grizzly's captain wed
A village girl; their home his fishing boat—
By day, by night together and afloat,
In harbor, or far off by Salmon Head.
We often watched her on the deck, and said:
"A rarely happy woman, so denote
Those steady eyes, calm hands, and singing throat."
Then came the word, "The captain's wife is dead."

The stately fishing vessels, near a score,
Glide slowly down the channel, single file,
(The cornets piping, "Nearer, my God, to Thee")
And vanish round the island. Nevermore
Her greeting gesture, song, or sudden smile,
As the Grizzly hails its harbor from the sea.

SELDEN LINCOLN WHITCOMB.

Horoscope

He shall be born tomorrow who will grope
These arid caverns out to grasp a sun,
Chase frantic comets down this hollow slope
Of night, and leash fierce orbits to the run
Of logarithmic cables, who will bear
His quest too near the outer verge of sight,
Lusting for planet beauties, who will wear
Sky-triumphs like a crown of thorny light.

Panic shall strike him at his polished glasses
Midway between pale morning and the dark,
Miring his feet in nebular morasses,
And they shall find him ashy-templed, stark,
His ceiling riddled with the cosmic glare,
Madness like star-fingers in his hair.

FRANCIS MASON.

Tranced Legato

Last night I dreamed that you were dead: I stood
Looking at water flowing past a gate,
You leaned beside me whistling. "It is late,"
You said, and raised the latch. An awful flood
Broke in and covered you. If I could play
Fugue or concerto on a single string?
(Oh, centuries I stood there bargaining
For you, till death consented to repay.)

Leaning against your tomb, fiddle to chin,
I struck the first long note. With stinging blow
The taut string snapped beneath the moving bow.
Deep, merciful oblivion rushed in;
Crowded the formless walls of sleep, withdrew,
To dream this pain and wake to find it true!

MARGARET TOD RITTER.

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BOOKS

A History of Russia, Volume IV (1672-1762) by V. O. Kluchevsky; translated from the Russian by C. J. Hogarth. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $4.50.

THIS book is much more than a narrative of the land of folk-song and Socialism: it is, in many ways, a masterpiece of history writing. The groundwork of Russian historiography was laid only in the nineteenth century by Serge Soloffyoff of Moscow University (father of the great Catholic philosopher, Vladimir Soloffyoff). He was the first true historian of what is now called the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic. His pupil and successor, V. O. Kluchevsky, was trained for the Orthodox priesthood, but turned to history during the latter years of the past century, focussing his mind at the start on the Boyars' Council records, the beginnings of Russian constitutional history. This is why Kluchevsky was called by the emperor to help draw up laws for the new Russian Duma. It is noteworthy, though, that in spite of the author's thoroughly conservative love of country, this volume was withheld from publication until official censorship lightened in 1910. The Soviet government has printed the fifth volume and nationalized the whole series as a common belonging of the Russian people.

Professor Kluchevsky assumes in his readers such knowledge of detail as would be looked for in a Russian secondary-school graduate. Masterfully he thrusts aside every unserviceable document; to foreign policy he seems sometimes to be blind; he sets out to tell the early economic story of modern Russia: the period from the childhood of Peter, the first emperor, to the uprising that brought Catherine II to Rurik's seat of might. Nine chapters are given to the military, economic, fiscal, commercial, industrial, and administrative reforms of Peter the Great, two chapters to his immediate achievements and their meaning, and the four remaining chapters to the reigns of Catherine I, Peter II, Anna, John VI, Elizabeth, and Peter III. The second chapter is a keen weighing of Emperor Peter's mind, build, and way of doing things. It is perhaps at once the most instructive and the most amusing bit of the book. The character sketches of Elizabeth and Anna are remarkably well wrought. Kluchevsky likens Peter's westernizings to a sequence of April showers that, though boisterous enough to strip trees of their boughs, yet freshen the air and enliven growth. Of the six direct followers of Peter I, three were women, one a boy of twelve, one a babe, and the other an idiot.

Professor Kluchevsky, however, slights the religious side of Russian history. This is unfortunate, for, aside from the fact that no scientific historian can rightly overlook the Being from Whom all deeds are dated, the need of a religious appreciation is peculiarly evident in any account of the era beginning with Peter the Great. Peter made the Holy Synod and laid down laws for the Orthodox Church of Russia. Even though church history be a special business, no worldly account of Russia's past is whole if lacking an understanding of the importance of Orthodoxy. Until 1917 Orthodoxy was the soul of Pravoslav civilization and had done more than any other human establishment to shape the distinctively Russian mind. At times it is almost impossible to draw the line between the Russian's love of God and his love of homeland. No wonder, therefore, that Professor Kulchevsky's utterly secular history has become the handbook of Soviet history students.

Peter the Great founded more than the Russian Senate and the Holy Synod: he brought into being the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, which is today the centre of systematic

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learned inquiry and with which is bound up the great Russian network of educational institutions having a strictly scientific purpose. Yavorski, Prokopovitch, Trediakoffski, Dmitrieff, Sumarokoff, Pososhkoff, Tatishcheff, Schlotzer, and Muller each did his share in the Petrine literary renaissance. Elizabeth's eyes saw the beginning of the first Russian university and the rise of modern Russian literature and learning in Lomonossoff. This peasant broke ground in fields of sundry kinds: philological, historical, economic, and scientific. He was the first remarkable poet of his time. His powerful mind and healthy patriotism were brought into the realm of learning in such manner as to render a very great help to later Russian scholarship. Kluchevsky might have made use of the Caves Monastery chronicles in Kieff. That he has cast aside Russian literature and religion of the Petrine and Elizabethan times is indeed regrettable.

Mr. Hogart's tranliterations from the Russian are neither phonetic nor consistent; too many French, German and Russian words have been left unaltered; an English sentence of no less than 121 words mars page seventy-one; such remarks as "When Charles had settled August's hash and decided to march on Moscow" seem unfitting; the index is limited to proper names; the type is painful to read, the translation wretchedly contrived. Professor Kluchevsky's original Russian flows along smoothly and with much archaic charm; Mr. Hogarth's English wends its way irksomely, haltingly, sometimes, as on page 148, failing altogether to give the true thought of the Slavonic idiom. There are but six misprints in this work of well-nigh four hundred pages, but that fact does not atone for a very second-rate rendering of a literary and historiographical masterpiece.

D. L. M. Gray.

The Gentleman from the 22nd: An Autobiography, by Benjamin Antin. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.50.

Fire Under the Andes, by Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $4.00.

IN THE peculiar gentry who pass on others in review, there is a blemish known as a blind spot. To some phase of life they are unresponsive. It is my eccentricity to dislike expansive emotional outbursts. The above two books are biographical portraits written with an emotional bias. They are, however, not at all alike. Mr. Antin has written his own story of the rise of an immigrant politician in such a manner as to make the State Assembly appear to be the theatre of stark tragedy where Gargantuan figures toy with the fates. Miss Sergeant has written intimate, deeply felt, short biographies of a diverse group of Americans who are contributing the force of finely devoted lives to the richness of our national life; and though her feeling toward her sympathetic subjects gets out of hand occasionally, on the main she persuades me from my prejudice.

Mr. Antin's autobiography may be said to be a rhapsody on the promised land. The Senator from the Bronx has naïvely written this book as though it were to be read on a soap-box. Here again are Castle Gardens and the Jewish East Side. This legislator, he would have us know, is strong for the people, and in rehearsing his battles with popular abuse, he takes it for granted that his readers are familiar with the facts, omits the details, and gives vent to his feelings. All his tones are either sonorous or dulcet as he discovers Republicans predatory and Democrats noble. Looking upon the world at large, with the rosy glow of the inspirational school, he remarks life in a torrential foment of simple passions and prejudices.

Observe this prose poem projection of our native land: "America! A dance—a song—a light—a laugh—a child on the hilltop of the universe crying for the moon—reaching for it, begging for it, ever nearer, ever closer, closer, closer, there it is—touch it—feel it—hug it—keep it—the moon, the stars, the sky, the blue, the pale blue, where there is peace—peace and quiet." Extraordinary as this may seem, it is not an isolated outburst, but typical of the whole manner of this book. Perhaps he has taken a leaf from Whitman in this hymn to America. If so, it might be well to remember that a single leaf makes neither a Whitman nor a green bay tree.

Miss Sergeant, who calls herself "an unaffected New Englander," has aptly taken her title from Emerson. Her book is comprised of fourteen contemporary portraits. In his quiet manner Emerson was a disturber; and these portraits' subjects are, too. She says that "they are all fighters, Americans in conflict with something—with the age, evil or ignorance, as they see it—with themselves, if they are artists." It is this fiery core that Miss Sergeant has perceived and sharply projected. Yet this record of achievements, conflicts and aspiration has been both shrewdly and affectionately set down. Writers share her pages with two doctors, a painter, a dramatist, a professor, an editor, an actress, a singer, and a jurist.

Her method is justified in its grasp of the feelings of things and ideas. It is kindly and critical, universal in scope, and familiar. The sketch of Amy Lowell is the best of the collection. Perhaps she is happiest in portraying women. But the picture of Mencken and Bryan at Dayton has memorable quality. White of Kansas is also a fascinating study. Robert Frost and O'Neill seem impalpably to escape her. Fire Under the Andes contains portraits that are a revelation. Here the vital forces have been tempered to viable images. The author has realized her understanding with a craftsmanship that would be worthy of her gifted group of subjects themselves. The result is a beautiful book of imagination and contemporary ideas.

Edwin Clark.

Passing the Love of Women, by Joseph White (Giuseppe Bianco). Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.00.

Never Give All, by Maude Radford Warren. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.00.

The Ghost Book, edited by Cynthia Asquith. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.00.

THE author of Passing the Love of Women takes the double refuge of two pseudonyms, possibly to lend verisimilitude to the journal form in which he molds this history of the transcendent love that existed between two English brothers—a love whose tragic consequences the author purports to justify to his estranged wife in the autobiographical study which comprises the novel. The background of the story is psychological inasmuch as the narrative is motivated by the phobias which have from youth obsessed the younger brother, and from the results of which the older brother has tried to protect him. Yet the narrative itself grows sleepy, and the psychiatric problem itself develops in the journalist's hands depths so slight that one is absorbed chiefly in the background of the English countryside, redolent of farms and beasts; and in the intimate, ruddy Anglo-Saxonism of the style, a quality which gives warmth and reality to a tale in other respects tepid. In view of its defects as well as of the simple expression and sincere feeling of the book, it would not be surprising if the record turned out to be in all respects genuine.

Never Give All, by Maude Radford Warren, is another marriage-problem novel, distinguished chiefly by the lack of foundation for any serious problem at all; for the man and woman involved love one another intelligently, manage their

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slight economic and temperamental difficulties successfully, and would not seem to be in dire straits in the least if the author, for the sake of posing a "problem," did not have them pause dramatically at regular intervals and exclaim, "Oh, yes, my problem! My marriage . . . unhappy. . . ." In so far as it remains a commonplace story of married life and the adjustments both man and wife must make to their union, the story is not without interest; on the other hand, when faced with such major incidents as the husband's unfaithfulness in France, the characters are so readily manipulated to the author's needs that the superficiality of their conception becomes evident. The dialogue, too, despite an occasional flair for idiom, is stultified by its lack of individuality, and, in emotional crises, by that unnatural sentimentality out of which the Gene Stratton Porter kind of writing is made.

The list of eminent authors—most of them young Englishmen—who contribute stories to The Ghost Book is warrant enough of the literary distinction with which the spirit world is therein treated. D. H. Lawrence, Walter de la Mare, Hugh Walpole, May Sinclair, are sample names; yet, though few of the stories are trivial and almost all possess personal flavor and narrative fluency, one is disappointed to find the ghosts themselves so discreet and unexciting. Mr. De la Mare arouses in our breasts a mild agitation over a mysterious recluse; Mr. Denis Mackail writes charmingly about Shakespeare returning to save his reputation from the blot of one undestroyed copy of Alexander the Great; Mr. Desmond MacCarthy pictures a man's evil past in the performance of spirit tricks that balk his turn to virtue and happiness; Oliver Onions tickles one's risibilities with a humorously realistic conception of ghosts with names like Sir Egbert the Dauntless—and so on. In some stories the ghost himself is only hinted at; at the conclusion of others, one feels robbed of the satisfaction of detecting which of the characters is really It, possibly because of one's ignorance of the latest book on psychiatry. Such being the new (and very mild) conception of ghosts, one might be pardoned for putting Ghost Stories down with a wistful sigh and turning to someone like Poe, who understood that the real function of a ghost is to make one afraid, after having read about him, of that ten-foot space between the light-switch and the bed.

HARRY MCGUIRE.

Negro Labor in the United States, by Charles H. Wesley. New York: Vanguard Press, Inc. $0.50.

SO HARMLESS a book deserves to be listed in better company than appears in the advertisements on its cover, including, as they do, such radicals as Tolstoi, Marx, Lenin, Kropotkin, H. G. Wells, Upton Sinclair and the like. The work purports to be, and in the main is, a history of the rise and advance of Negro labor in the United States. Beginning with slave labor in colonial times, Mr. Wesley (who earned his Ph.D. from Harvard with this treatise) reviews chronologically the story of Negro labor. Incidentally he asks questions such as "Will the Negro work?", ever seeking to prove by facts and documentary evidence that, given like circumstances, equal educational and cultural opportunities, the Negro is essentially as much a man as the Caucasian. As far as the reviewer (born and reared in the South) is concerned, this thesis needed no proving, but there are only too many Americans, even today, who cannot or will not face the facts and recognize that under a skin of another tint than ours, the Negro is substantially as human as we are.

The book makes rather dry reading, probably because its main objective is to instruct. However, only students of the labor

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problem need linger over the numerous columns of statistics. There are one or two criticisms in order. In the first place, quoting newspapers to substantiate statements is not very convincing, e.g., to quote a newspaper as authority for the statement that in a minor riot in New York a gang of Irish laborers fled from a gang of Negroes. Secondly, more than any other race the Irish are specified as exhibiting unreasonable race prejudice against Negroes. These and other similar statements might very profitably have been omitted without in any way weakening the worth of the book as a history of Negro labor in our country.

While by no means justifying Negro laborers for threatening to align themselves with out-and-out radicals, still one can see many extenuating facts. First of all, there is their exclusion from full and equal rights in the American Federation of Labor, an exclusion that might almost be said to drive them into the I. W. W., which receives them with open arms. Secondly, there is the way they are discriminated against in almost every other sphere of activity, whether social, business or political. It takes heroic virtue to remain patient and resigned when struggling against prejudice resting solely on color.

Finally, it was a pleasure to see Mr. Wesley admit that after the Civil War, the majority of the white people of the South were favorably disposed toward the Negro, and it is to be hoped that eventually time, the great healer, will bring about a perfect coöperation between the two races, based upon a sympathetic understanding of each other.

W. A. MULHERIN.

Ignatius Loyola: The Founder of the Jesuits, by Paul Van Dyke. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.

EVERY age recreates its traditional heroes after its own likeness, writing large its own character into the portrait. That is why the ultimate biography of Poe, Napoleon, Lincoln, and Ignatius Loyola will never be written. It is no disparagement, then, of Paul Van Dyke's work on Ignatius to say that it is a typically modern redaction of a perennial theme. And it is a redaction for which we are grateful, not so much because of the material, but rather for the essentially modern method of handling that material.

Despite the evidences of deep research, there appears to be but little new substance in Dr. Van Dyke's study; the salient features of Ignatius's character are not violently disarranged. After reading this work, we know approximately what we knew before: that Ignatius was dominated by a single noble purpose; that to the execution of this purpose he brought a paramount genius for organization and a terrifying patience as a fisher of souls. We see him falling into human error—writing an infelicitous letter, or occasionally failing in his choice of a lieutenant. In short, we receive once more from Dr. Van Dyke's book those swift intimations of wonder that have always clustered about Ignatius's name. And in comparing these intimations with, let us say, Francis Thompson's study of Loyola, we find that the factual outlines of the man and saint remain pretty much as they were.

But if the material is graciously familiar, the method of handling it is refreshingly new. Avoiding on one hand the facile piety of the Sunday-School Lives, and on the other the neurotic sneering of the Strachey cult, Dr. Van Dyke introduces in Ignatius Loyola a new technique in the writing of saints' biographies. He has applied the scientific method of history to a great historical figure who happens to be at the same time a great saint. He has rendered a high service to this department of biography by rigidly applying to his material the same laws of critical scrutiny that he would apply to a study of Charles V or William Wordsworth.

Hitherto the reader of saintly biographies has been obliged to rig up his own critical machinery, questioning this legend, discounting that superstition, with nothing but instinct as his guide. Lacking accurate tools, he has been obliged to isolate by guesswork the probable facts of the matter. And it has been difficult sometimes, while bogged in the saccharine brackishness of most saintly biographies, to come to an estimate of the saint's real character. All saints have hitherto been cut from the same piece of goods, in a somewhat monotonous pattern. But Paul Van Dyke suggests that Ignatius had a personality and shows that personality operating in a world of other personalities. (The sketch of Cardinal Caraffa is excellent, and Diego Lainez moves most convincingly.) Moreover, the author uses the critical pruning-hook with reasoned calm. He collates, compares, analyzes, and makes his report. Here is one account of the matter; here is another. Which, if either, seems to concur with what we know of Ignatius, his environment and his associates? The answer is always just, invariably sympathetic. In many instances the conclusion is wisely left to the reader.

Avoiding the sentimental and hysteric, Dr. Van Dyke narrowly escapes what some readers will call tepidity. The author has striven for a classic totality of effect, an effect that will be independent of rhetoric and histrionism. The book is tranquil, too tranquil perhaps for such a passionate hero as Ignatius. This classic low-relief can scarcely be avoided, however, where the critical chisel is sincerely employed. In using that chisel, Dr. Van Dyke has carved out a new form in biography, and has rendered impossible a return to the showier but less candid school of Lives.

HENRY MORTON ROBINSON.

The Crescent Moon, by Francis Brett Young. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

AS ONE closes the cover on the final page of Francis Brett Young's latest novel, the last words echo and the reader finds himself exclaiming with the author: "This is Africa. . . . This is Africa." For if in previous books this writer has conveyed some of the sombre mystery, some of the inherent savagery, some of the spaciousness and some of the strange and untamed beauty of the continent called dark, he has intensified and made more acute in The Crescent Moon every picture he projected in these earlier works. And if the background of this new story is more vivid and more suggestive, the characters who emerge from it are also more dominating and the drama they live is more arresting than any others hitherto presented by this author. If there are descriptions of nature in many moods that are vibrant, there are also portraits of men and women under stress which throb and palpitate.

The figure of James Burwarton, missionary and martyr predestinate, developing in the face of impending tragedy, growing more human and more loving under sacrifice, yet bewildered by the discovery that sacrifices to Moloch and Ashtoreth are not merely stories of the defection of certain of the people chosen of God in their early days, but realities of the present in this Africa he would aid in converting, is etched truly and deeply. "I suppose in the class from which he came there are any number of young men of this kind," says the etcher, "born mystics with a thirst for beauty which might be slaked in any glorious way, yet finds its satisfaction in the only revelation that comes their way in a religion from which even the Reformation has not banished all beauty whatsoever."

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Hector M'Crea, son of a father whose life "kept inside the Old Testament," but who himself confesses to having "played skittles with the Ten Commandments," knows James and his kind. As he says to Eva Burwarton, in speaking of her brother and his predecessor at Luguru: "People at home talk more nonsense, I should imagine, about missionaries, than about any other body of men. On the one side, of their sacrifices. They do make sacrifices. We know that. But you must remember that a man who has once lived in the wilds of Africa doesn't take kindly to life at home. . . . But there's the other side; the people who laugh at all missionary work and talk about the folly of ramming Christianity down the throats of people who have good working religions of their own. They are just as wide of the mark as the others."

The story of the rescue of Eva by M'Crea, of their wanderings in the jungle and of the strengthening of every noble instinct in the man during their association is an exceptional and shining love narrative which has fitting culmination in the voluntary renunciation of every thought of union when the call of honor has to be met by M'Crea.

The Crescent Moon is high romance which not only thrills, but compels to thought.

ERNEST F. BODDINGTON.

The Catholic Directory, 1927. New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons. $5.00.

IT IS a gratification to find The Official Catholic Directory for 1927 in the handsome format given it by P. J. Kenedy and Sons. The larger page and the clearer types will make it grateful to all who must frequently consult its authority. The story it gives of the actual conditions of the Catholic Church in the United States and its protectorates, in the British dominions of North America, as well as England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, in Cuba and Mexico, is for the most part heartening and adequate. Its data and information, derived from the reports of the ecclesiastical authorities of the dioceses concerned, is as authoritative as may be obtained.

This Catholic Directory is an essential volume in any office, whether business, educational or institutional, touching upon the interests and conditions of Catholics in the English-speaking world at large. It is an institution in itself and one to be highly commended for its dignified character and the noble fairness with which it is conducted.

There are several new and important features in the Directory for 1927. Just before the List of Places is to be found a colored map showing the Church provinces of the United States and the limits of each archdiocese and diocese. There is a directory of Diocesan Agencies of Catholic Charities: Missionary Activities and Communities are catalogued with a general summary of Catholic hospitals and a list of converts throughout the United States. The summary of gains in Church membership for 1926-27 gives an increase of 604,574 Catholics, making a population of 19,483,296 members of the Church in our country. This increase is only partly accounted for in the gain of the Vicariate-Apostolic of the Hawaiian Islands—a gain of 103,100 souls. Omitting reports from some large archdioceses like New York, Chicago, Monterey, Fresno, Portland and Providence—the number of converts already amounts to 35,751. There is a gratifying decline only in the number of orphans in the Catholic Homes.

Altogether this is a report to cheer on the worker in the Vineyard toward yet greater achievements.

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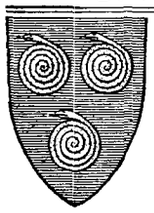
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BRIEFER MENTION

The Interior Spirit of the Religious of the Visitation of Holy Mary, from the collection by the Bishop of Evreux, according to the French edition of 1914. Baltimore: John Murphy Company. $1.00.

THE analysis of the spirit of the religious community for women he established was undoubtedly a task which Saint Francis de Sales accomplished with especial love and fervor. He felt that Providence guided him most carefully in the attempt to found an order which would revive the mystical heroism of early Christian days. Therefore the little book of which a new translation is offered the American reader is a great spiritual classic. Though intended primarily for those who have elected to follow the holy rule, it will enlighten and benefit all who read its compact but wealthy pages. What could be more noble than a concept of life which reads like this: "A Daughter of the Visitation should respect and honor all kinds of persons, not showing contempt to anyone however poor or abject, accustoming herself to consider all christians only as children of God and members of Jesus Christ, cordially embracing them in the unity of His divine Body, in which all distinctions of poor and rich, master and servant, learned and ignorant, are forgotten and lost. In this same Body she should consider herself, and the happiness of belonging to it ought to constitute her glory." The little book will profit all who take it up, revealing as it does both the holiness and the gentility of Geneva's great saint.

Chinese Verse, by Chung Park Lum. New York: Lop Quan Company.

IN England and America, the praises of Yone Noguchi, the Americanized Japanese who won the general applause of our now bald or grey-haired critics, are well remembered. Later we have had the purer Japanese and Chinese studies of Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell, Arthur Davison Fiske, and Witter Bynner: and now the voice of the Chinese-American is being heard in the land.

This component of East and West breaks forth from the Bowery of New York, associated in the minds of sight-seeing Westerners and Southerners with all that is horrible in the moving pictures—a region of joss-houses, laundries and tong-wars. And this voice of Chung Park Lum sings of The Flower Girl, The Cat, The Blue Lantern, Chinese New York, The Butterfly and Wild Geese—phrased and metred in the language of China and New York, with a naïve frankness and earnest simplicity that disarm criticism and awaken a personal interest in the poet and his books of instructing in "Anglo-Chinese Commercial Conversation"—works which, he tells us, are intended for Chinese laundrymen in this country.

A Book of Church History, by Susan Cunnington. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $1.25.

IN A tiny compass it would seem that a history of the Church would be hardly comfortable. An institution contemporary with the foundation of Christianity throughout the various races and nations of the whole world would seem to call for voluminous breadth. Nevertheless, as Father Hugh Pope of the Dominicans declares, Miss Cunnington's 250 pages present a marvel of condensation, not only in the organization of facts, but also in their coördination. Her work has made Catholic readers, particularly those who have undertaken the task of teaching history, her grateful debtors.

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